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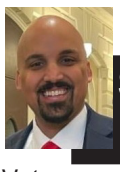
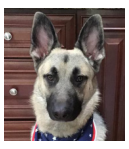
INDEX



Senator Payano PAGE 4

Beneath The Surface Paul Murano PAGE 23

Auditor DiZoglio In Your Corner PAGE 5



Kane PAGE 13

Bill Cushing TV TALK PAGE 27

Vets.....1
Editorial.....2
State.....2,4,5-7
Methuen.....2,5,6,8,13-15, 26
Haverhill.....2
Lawrence.....4, 6, 9, 11, 14-16 , 18
ROWLEY.....5
Dracut.....8,16
Pets.....13
National.....8,18
NOTEBOOK.....20
Books.....21
Religion.....23,27
Health.....23
Real Estate.....24
TV.....27

Valley Patriot of the Month

America in World War II and Korea, James Fiorello

John Cuddy
VALLEY PATRIOT HERO REPORTER

Hailing from the long-gone Boston neighborhood, once known as the West End, Methuen's James Fiorello graduated from Boston's Mechanic Arts High School with the class of 1941. He then enrolled at Fitchburg State College, with the intent on becoming a teacher. The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7th changed the career plans for him and the sixteen million young Americans who served in World War II. The population of the United States in 1941 was one hundred and thirty-two million. Nearly twenty percent of all Americans alive on December 7th, served in the US Military during World War II.

Commissioned an Ensign in the US Navy, he was assigned to the USS Bexar (APA-237/LPA-237) a Haskell-class attack transport in service with the United States Navy from 1945 to 1970. He joined the crew as the ship embarked on her first deployment to the Pacific, as part of "Operation Magic Carpet." James and the ship's crew was tasked with returning US troops from the Pacific Theater, back to the United States, until February 1946. One of James's most vivid war memories was spending Christmas 1945 in bomb damaged Tokyo Bay. He said, "I have no bitterness towards the Japanese people, it was their leadership that started the war and continued fighting the war after it was lost."

James also has very fond memories of liberty in San Francisco, California in 1945, prior to deploying to Japan. He said, "The restaurants in San Francisco at the time, were beyond words, outstanding." Returning from transport duty, the ship's crew had a brief tour of duty around San Diego, during the early part of 1946. The ship was then ordered to Pearl Harbor to prepare for Operation Cross-Roads. Crossroads was the historic event on Bikini Atoll, designed to test the effectiveness of the atomic bomb on warships. Over two hundred warships participated in the operation, seventy-five of them as targets. James's ship, the

Bexar, served as the test's equipment supply center.

After the war, James completed his BA with Fitchburg State. He then completed his MA at Springfield College. Finally earning a Doctorate in Education at the University of Connecticut. When North Korea invaded South Korea on June 25th, 1950, James, then a US Naval Reserve Officer, found himself back on active duty. He was re-assigned to serve once again on the USS Bexar, a ship named after Bexar County, Texas. During July 1950, the USS Bexar departed

HERO: PAGE 26

We Stand With Israel - Free Gaza From Hamas

On October 7th, civilians from the terrorist held "Palestinian territories" in Israel invaded border communities, murdered the local police officers, blew up the local police stations, and then went house to house raping women, beheading babies and children, torturing and killing men, and taking hostages back to their terrorist enclaves in Gaza.

The Arab-Muslim world publicly celebrated across the globe in unison with the terrorist Muslims who invaded Israel and chanted "Death to the Jews". Not even in WWII has the world seen such a thing.

Since then, Israel has declared war on the terrorist "Palestinian" territory of Gaza, where civilian terrorists build their headquarters and store their weapons of war in the basements of schools and hospitals to avoid being bombed.

While the civilian terrorists of Gaza, (and their elected leaders in Hamas), indiscriminately bomb and murder innocent civilians in Israel - as well as openly calling for the extermination of all the Jews - the Israelis have provided food, water, electricity, heat, internet services, fuel, and medical services to the very people in Gaza who want to wipe them off the face of the earth.

Moreover, once the Jews of Israel began their war on the terrorists in Gaza, they publicly warned civilians where and when they would be bombing to decrease innocent casualties. This is a courtesy that the terrorist Palestinians do not afford to the Jews. Yet, there are still Americans trying to paint the Israelis as the bad guys - and the terrorist Nazis in the "Palestinian" territories as the good guys. They distract from the facts we just outlined, by arguing about land rights, grievances from 1,000 years ago, and ironically accusing Israel of being "fascists" and "white supremacists."

Don't fall for it.

The Arab-Muslim world is targeting Jews in Europe, in the United States, and in Asia. None of those Jews have anything to do with the nation of Israel or the land they currently hold.

If this was about land, the focus of such Muslim rage would be pointed at the Israeli government, not religious Jews living outside that country.

We have long believed - and stated in previous editorials - that if every Jew left Israel tomorrow and moved to the South Pole, the Arab-Muslim world would abandon Israel and declare war on the South Pole the very next day.

We stand with Israel and the Jewish people.. and declare that the terrorists of Hamas (who are "civilians") must be eradicated.

Gaza must be leveled.

We find it frightening that the good people of the democratic west have not learned a damn thing from the holocaust of the Nazis in WWII - all the while modern day Jew-haters have learned quite well how to better exterminate Jews, and how to get the rest of the world to stand by and let it happen.

After the holocaust we said never again!

"Never again" is today.

We must act accordingly. ◊

New Firefighters and Veterans Day

Ryan Hamilton
STATE REP., METHUEN/HAVERHILL

First off, I'd like to start by thanking our veterans for their service to our nation. On Saturday, November 11th, we will be celebrating Veterans Day.

I'd ask you all to take time out of your day to not only think about a veteran but tell them why you are so thankful for their service.

We, indeed, are the home of the free because of the brave. I'd ask you all to take time out of your day to not only think about a veteran but tell them why you are so thankful for their service. We, indeed, are the home of the free because of the brave.

In this month's edition of the Valley Patriot, I will be giving you updates on this past week's events that I have been attending around the district.

First, I'd like to start with an event I attended in Methuen. It was a grand opening of factorial that will bring over 100 jobs to Methuen in manufacturing. Factorial produces cutting-edge batteries that go into our electric cars.

Governor Healy, Congresswoman Trahan, Representative Reyes, and Mayor Perry were among the many officials who celebrated the opening of such a great company.

I also attended the graduation of eight new firefighters: four in Methuen and four in Haverhill.

I was joined by my colleagues, Francisco Paulino and Estela Reyes, as we presented citations to all eight new fighters.

I also want to thank each firefighter for choosing a career in public service and know that they will keep Methuen and Haverhill safe.

Lastly, I attended the Veterans Alliance Veterans Breakfast last month, hosted at the AMVETS in Haverhill. It was a packed crowd supporting such a worthy cause.

I want to thank Mike Magonagle for organizing this event for the past seven years, and I was happy to donate money that will go toward services for Veterans.

I'd like to wish all the Valley Patriot readers a happy and healthy Thanksgiving. I hope you all get to enjoy time with family and friends!

As always, please don't hesitate to reach out to my office with any ideas, concerns, or questions at ryan.hamilton@mahouse.gov or 617-722-2090. ◊

Speak up stop attorneys being protected by immunity!

End Attorney Immunity

To END attorney Immunity in MA support Senate Bill S.1131 'An Act to strengthen rules governing attorney conduct; penalties for misconduct '. malegislature.gov/Bills/193/S1131

Attorney immunity protects attorneys from civil liability. Immunity given to attorneys is a privilege that makes it impossible for litigants to obtain fair and equitable treatment in court.

If you agree that attorneys should be accountable for their fraudulent actions during judicial proceedings, contact the Judiciary Committee to pass S.1131 to end attorney immunity and require attorney conduct to be regulated and punishable by the state. Write to the Judiciary Committee, 24 Beacon St., Rm. 136, Boston, MA 02133 or e-mail michael.musto@mahouse.gov

It is time for Massachusetts citizens to have the same protection and remedies as several other states: Ark., Cal., Ind., Iowa, Minn, Mont., N.Y., N.C., N.D., Okla., S.D., Wyo. These states do not give absolute immunity to attorneys who commit judicial misconduct; these states do permit civil actions that allege attorney acts of fraud, intentional misrepresentation, deceit or collusion meant to deceive the court or any opposing party:

No legitimate purpose is served by granting attorneys litigation "immunity" either absolute or qualified; it is an unjustified protection for the unworthy.

Litigation immunity undermines the legitimacy of the country's legal process and constitutional protection.

We ask for your support in the interest of justice and for fair and equitable treatment in the courts.

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Lawrence Council Approves Bus Station Use for Homeless Dinners

Last month, the Lawrence City Council voted 8-1 in favor of allowing weekly homeless dinners to continue at the Buckley Garage on Common Street.

The dinners are sponsored by a local non-profit called The Movement Family (or TMF) every Wednesday evening at 9pm. The dinners took place for two years before the previous mayor, Dan Rivera, put a stop to it saying that TMF was using a city-owned property, and that they were using the property without a legal permit to do so.

TMF appealed the mayor's ruling by applying for a permit and appearing before the City Council but was rejected by a vote of 5-4.

When Mayor DePena took office two years ago, he made good on his campaign promise to allow TMF to return to the Buckley Garage as long as they applied for a permit, and got approval of the council, which they did. The two-year permit was set to expire in April of 2024.

Last month, TMF founder Michael Gorman filled Lawrence City Council Chambers with supporters and who spoke to advocate for TMF to have their permit to be renewed.

State Representative Francisco Paulino took time from his duties in Boston to speak before the council, saying that TMF's efforts to feed and clothe the homeless is making a significant difference in the community. He pointed out that not only do they provide a meal for the homeless once a week, but partner up with outside organizations like Tewksbury Detox to get them clean and put them in transitional housing. Paulino also talked about how he grew up poor and had no food when he was younger, adding that he wished that he had TMF back then when he would sometimes go days without eating.

Lawrence City Councilor Maria De La Cruz, (who was the decided vote against TMF when Rivera was mayor), spoke at public participation thanking TMF for the work they do in the community, singled out Valley Patriot publisher Tom Duggan, and announced that she would be voting to support TMF's permit extensions.

When it was all over, the council voted 8-1 in favor of renewing the permit for TMF until April of 2026.

"This was a huge win for us," TMF founder Michael Gorman told The Valley Patriot to thunderous applause in the City Hall lobby after the vote.

"First, we need to thank The Valley Patriot and all their readers and supporters of Facebook who made calls and wrote letters, and make donations to TMF every single week. The Valley Patriot is the reason we are here at city hall tonight and this win could not have happened without Tom and his readers."

"I also want to thank the Lawrence firefighters for making calls and writing letters, as well as Mayor DePena, Octavian Spanner, the city councilors, and everyone who stood by us."

"It is so crucial to show these individuals on the streets who might be addicted, or in a dark place, that there is somewhere to go not just for a meal but for help, and services, and love," Gorman concluded. "Lawrence officials sent a very powerful message that the city cares about everyone, not just those who make campaign contributions - and there's something wonderful about that." ◊

Raising the Bar on Education

The Crucial Need to Increase the Dropout Age

Pavel Payano
STATE SENATOR, 1ST ESSEX DISTRICT

As a State Senator, my commitment to improving education in Massachusetts is unwavering. Senate bill 341, "An Act Relative to Dropout Prevention and Student Recovery," a pivotal piece of legislation, which I sponsored, aims at reshaping the educational landscape for our students. The primary goal of this bill is to elevate the age at which a student is permitted to leave school to 18, and to introduce a pilot program targeted at districts with dropout rates exceeding the state average. The vision behind this legislation is simple yet profound: ensuring that all our students have the tools and opportunities to earn their high school diploma.

Our state has witnessed considerable progress in reducing the dropout rate over the past decade. However, we must acknowledge that certain groups of students still face alarmingly high dropout rates. Data compiled by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) for the 2021-2022 school year uncovered troubling statistics. It revealed that 2.8% of Black and 4.3% of Hispanic or Latino students dropped out of high school, significantly higher than the statewide rate of 2.1%. The discrepancy becomes even more glaring when we look at Limited English Proficiency Learners (LEP), whose dropout rate stands at a staggering 7.8%, almost four times the statewide average. We must take concrete steps to ensure that every student, regardless of their racial, socioeconomic, or cultural background, is given the support and resources necessary to earn their high school diploma.

One crucial aspect of this legislation is raising the dropout age to 18. Our school districts should not be giving up on students during early high school years when students typically reach the age of 16. By extending the mandatory school attendance age to 18, we are sending a clear message that we believe in every student's potential and that we are committed to supporting them until they successfully complete their high school education.

But this bill is not just about raising the dropout age; it also introduces a pilot grant program designed to provide districts with the resources they need to keep students in school. This program focuses on districts with dropout rates higher than the statewide average, aiming to target students who have already dropped out or are at risk of doing so. It stipulates that the program must employ at least one of four methods known to be effective in helping students stay in school.

These methods encompass alternative education strategies, graduation coaches, dropout outreach and recovery programs, and expectant and parenting student support. Through these approaches, we can better engage students, address their unique needs, and provide the support required to guide them towards their high school diploma.

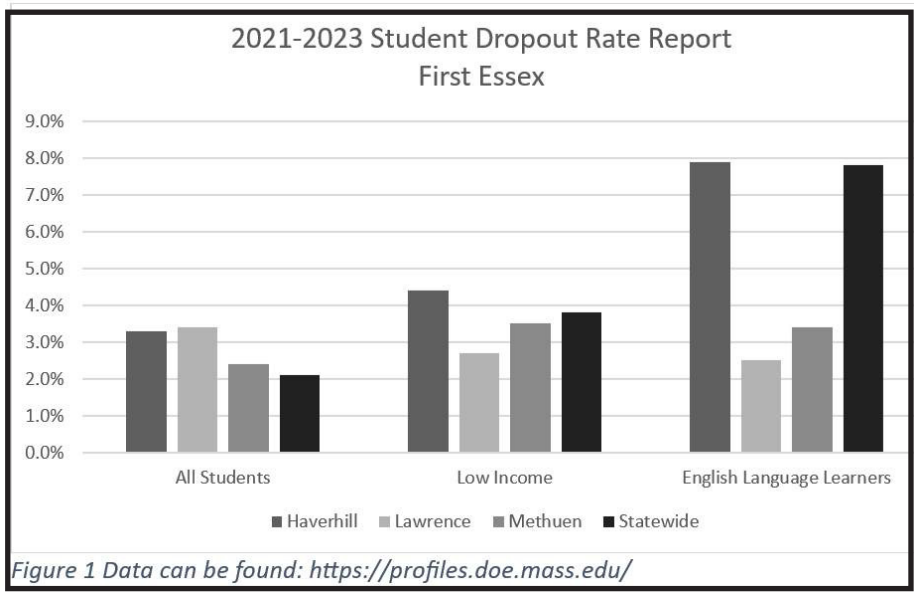

Figure 1 Data can be found: https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/

Accountability is central to this bill. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) will be responsible for leading an annual review of the pilot program, ensuring that participating districts are making the progress we desire. Additionally, DESE will submit a final report after the three-year pilot period, featuring a comprehensive analysis of all relevant data. This analysis will help us determine the effectiveness of the program and present specific legislative recommendations. Ultimately, it will guide us in deciding whether to expand, maintain, or discontinue the program.

In a world that thrives on innovation and adaptability, the future belongs to those who have the skills, determination, and opportunity to pursue their dreams. Success knows no bounds, and it doesn't hinge on a predetermined path, such as a traditional college education. The key is to equip every student with the foundational skills, resources, and support needed to unlock their full potential. This legislation is a crucial step toward that goal, and by raising the dropout age and implementing innovative programs, we can ensure that all students have the opportunities they need to build a successful future. ◊

Secretary of State's Office Confirms Ballots Went Uncounted in Rowley

Tom Duggan
VALLEY PATRIOT PUBLISHER

Emails obtained by The Valley Patriot reveal that a number of voters in Rowley had their ballots discarded and uncounted in last November's election where Kristin Kassner (D-Hamilton) won the 2nd Essex State Representative seat by one vote over Lenny Mirra (R-Georgetown).

Minutes taken during the recount in that race reveal that ballots rejected by voting machines were "spoiled" by election workers and not counted in the election. This was confirmed in emails from Michelle K. Tassinari, Director and Legal Counsel at the Office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth, who states that "election workers were spoiling ballots that could not be read by the tabulator. The Town Clerk was informed that spoiling ballots that could not be read by the tabulator is NOT the correct procedure. Ballots that cannot be read by the tabulator should be hand counted not spoiled."

At the conclusion of that recount, which found no change in Mirra's four vote lead, attorneys for Kassner demanded to view a pile of spoiled ballots.

They found ten ballots that were deemed to be improperly spoiled and pulled out five of them, all containing votes for Kassner, allowing her to win by one vote.

"We were treated rudely and unprofessionally from the very start," claims Sandra Capo, who was working at the recount on behalf of the Mirra campaign. "Trudy Reid tried to have me removed from the recount, claiming I was not allowed to work there because I was not the candidate.

I told her that Lenny is at the Ipswich recount, which was happening at the same time. I pointed out that Kassner also wasn't at Rowley because she was also at the Ipswich recount."

Reid, who apparently has a history of partisan behavior, was deputized into running the recount on behalf of the town of Rowley.

"We objected to the counting of spoiled ballots as this was not allowed at any other recount," Capo continued. "A phone call was made to the Secretary of State's office and Trudy Reid spoke to someone there. The Secretary of State's offices will not respond to requests as to what was said, so we don't know what she was told, but we're sure Reid wasn't told to allow one side to cherry pick five ballots when their candidate was down by four votes. And yet she did exactly that."

Mirra brought the issue to court where judge Thomas Dreschler ruled the matter was no longer in the court's jurisdiction, but rather with the House of Representatives. A Special House Committee was formed with Rep. Michael Day (D-Stoneham) as Chairman. After several weeks of no action Day decided to call the election for Kassner without reviewing any of the contested ballots.

House Minority Leader Brad Jones (R-North Reading), who was on the Special House Committee, submitted bill H-53 which would have requested the House to open the disputed ballots, but it was voted down along party lines with all Republicans voting in favor of it but all Democrats, with the exception of Russell Holmes (D-Boston), voting in opposition.

"The real problem here is Bill Galvin (D-Boston), our Secretary of State, has been completely silent on this and many other serious election issues," Mirra stated. "In addition to Rowley we had over a dozen ballots magically appearing at the recount in Ipswich that were not counted during the election. We also had over a hundred mailed-in ballots arriving in Ipswich after the election where signatures on envelopes did not match those on applications.

"This also happened in the 1st Middlesex race between Margaret Scarsdale (D-Pepperell) and Andrew Shepherd, where signatures on mailed in ballots did not match those on applications. Apparently, Galvin is perfectly fine with these problems as long as they benefit him and his party."

Massachusetts General Law, Ch. 54, Section 103 states that "the Supreme Judicial and Superior Courts shall have jurisdiction in equity to order the counting of any ballot improperly rejected." ◊

Reforms Sorely Needed at the Sex Offender Registry Board

IN YOUR CORNER with AUDITOR DIZOGLIO

State Auditor Diana DiZoglio is from Methuen and writes an exclusive column for The Valley Patriot every month.

Serving as Massachusetts State Auditor doesn't just mean reviewing finances. A big part of my role, as I often speak about with folks across the state, is reviewing the performance and efficacy of the Commonwealth's agencies and entities. A great example of the responsibility to look beyond number crunching is our office's recently released audit of the Sex Offender Registry Board (SORB).

People are familiar with the concept that Massachusetts registers convicted sex offenders, maintaining a database of where such people live and work in an effort to maintain public safety. This system of public safety is maintained by SORB, a seven-member board appointed by the Governor and staffed by more than 70 individuals.

Our recent audit looked at SORB's operations from July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2021. Covering that two-year period, my team honed in on whether SORB classified sex offenders at least 10 days before they were released from custody, thus ensuring they were assigned an appropriate level. Further, we looked at whether SORB used all the resources at their disposal to accurately identify sex offenders who were in violation of maintaining their registration.

I was disappointed to find that SORB underperformed in a way that could have a negative impact upon the public.

While incarcerated sex offenders are supposed to be assigned a classification at least 10 days prior to their release, per state law, SORB failed to do so with approximately 1/3 of those released during our two-year review window. More concerning, 77 offenders didn't receive their classification until after they were released.

This lax approach to the law meant those sex offenders' names, addresses, offenses, and registration statuses were not appropriately posted to SORB's website for level 2 and 3 sex offenders and were not otherwise available to the public.

Our audit team also identified other vulnerabilities regarding how SORB tracked offenders who have been released from incarceration. Namely, SORB's database was not kept up to date in all situations, with approximately 1 out of 5 offenders showing incorrect addresses when compared against records maintained by other state departments (such as the addresses the Department of Transitional Assistance records).

Part of the benefit of SORB is that it tracks the location of high-level offenders. By not ensuring that it has the current addresses of sex offenders considered in violation, SORB is not able to consistently communicate information about sex offenders' whereabouts, their offenses, and their classifications to local law enforcement agencies and the general public. What's disturbing is that some of these issues were identified the last time my predecessor audited SORB. These issues must be immediately addressed.

Our office has recommended that SORB increase their collaboration with correctional facilities to establish more reliable procedures for providing anticipated release dates for incarcerated offenders. We've also recommended the implementation of a tracking process that identifies any delays or issues that may arise, to ensure that all sex offenders are assigned final classifications prior to each offender's release.

For ensuring residential address accuracy, SORB needs to not only work more closely with other state agencies to verify addresses – SORB must also make a point of updating those addresses in their system when they are found.

We will continue to work with SORB and encourage their adoption of practices that maximize public safety.

As always, please feel free to contact my office at any time for more information at auditor@sao.state.ma.us and 617-727-2075.

Yours in service,
Diana ◊

Commitment to Growth and Remembrance in Methuen and Lawrence

Francisco Paulino
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

Dear Residents of Methuen and Lawrence,

It is with a heart full of pride that I recount a recent moment of honor and duty. Standing shoulder to shoulder with Methuen's finest—Ryan Campbell, Adam Marino, Kyle Sheehy, and Liam Sheehy—at their graduation in Stow, Massachusetts, I witnessed the embodiment of courage and commitment. Their rigorous training in Hazardous Materials and LNG/LPG operations is a testament to their dedication to safeguard our community.

Beyond the firehouse, my efforts in healthcare education continue. I'm fervently advocating for increased funding to improve understanding of MassHealth recertification, ensuring our community has access to necessary healthcare resources.

As a member of the Joint Committee on Revenue, I am deeply invested in the welfare of our senior veterans. They have served us unconditionally, and it is our moral imperative to reciprocate with legislation that upholds their dignity and honors their service.

In Lawrence, we recently paid homage to two of our bravest—Alex Jimenez and Greg Kent—whose sacrifices are forever etched in our hearts. They remind us of the precious freedoms we enjoy, and the price paid for these liberties. Their memory compels us to live with gratitude and to continually fight for the rights of every American.

Together, our dedication to safety, our resolve for health education, and our reverence for sacrifice strengthen the bonds within our communities of Methuen and Lawrence. Let's move forward with respect for our past and an unwavering commitment to our collective future.

Rep Francisco E Paulino
Francisco.Paulino@mahouse.gov ◊

Co-Sponsoring Environmental Legislation

Estela Reyes
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

First, I want to congratulate Valley Patriot publisher Tom Duggan who received an "Overcoming Obstacles" award from the Greater Lawrence Psychological Center last month. Given what Tom has been through, just in the last year alone, he has certainly earned this award.

I also want to congratulate Jana Zanni-Pesce on her decisive election win to the Methuen City Council, I am sure that Jana will serve the people of Methuen quite well over the next two years and I look forward to working with her.

As for what's going on in state government, protecting our environment has been a main focus of the legislature this session as well as working with local unions, and "equitable work."

As your state representative, I support policies to ensure a clean environment and growth in renewable energy careers.

There are three house bills that address this topic and I have co-sponsored these bills in hopes of creating more jobs that will support clean energy and better schools. They are:

H.1864 An Act relative to clean energy workforce standards and accountability

This bill ensures energy construction and infrastructure projects are sufficiently staffed with highly qualified workers. It also ensures projects create quality, family-sustaining jobs through the application of the state's prevailing wage laws. The goal of this legislation is to transition workers in fossil fuel-intensive industries to jobs in clean energy and protect their incomes and benefits through that transition.

H.1865 An Act relative to a just transition to clean energy

This bill provides training and employment opportunities to former and current energy workers being displaced. It will increase opportunities in the clean energy sector for residents of environmental justice communities. There will be benefits for workers who are displaced from the transition to clean energy jobs.

An environmental justice community is a community that is subject to a disproportionate burden of environmental hazards. The district Rep. Reyes represents the 4th Essex District, falls in that definition of being an environmental justice community, and would benefit from worker training and protections.

H.3691 An Act relative to healthy and sustainable schools

This bill will prioritize schools in environmental justice communities for implementing energy efficiency improvements and installing renewable energy systems. It will create an office to focus on schools' efficiency improvements through enforcing contract requirements. One focus will be to hire from environmental justice communities and to comply with the state's goal of hiring women, minorities, and veterans. Funding for this bill will be pulled from state agencies and federal environment-friendly sources.

H.444 An Act to expand the use of career and academic plans

This bill will ensure all high schools across Massachusetts participate in MyCAP by 2026. MyCAP, my career and academic plan, is a whole-school system that allows students to develop individualized college and career plans with the assistance of a counselor. MyCAP allows students to drive their education to support their post-graduation plans. Ensuring college and career counseling in schools lessens disparities household by household.

As for my time in Lawrence and Methuen, I was pleased to be at the ribbon cutting last month for Factorial Inc., an industry leader in the development of solid-state battery technology for electric vehicles. (See page 26).

The Lawrence Public Schools got $5,500 in state funding last month for MyCAP, a career planning program for students.

This program is connected to legislation that I am currently working on, along with Representative Cruz.

As always please feel free to reach out to my office if you have any concern by emailing laura.byman@mahouse.gov ◊

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Plenty to be Thankful for in Dracut

EYE ON DRACUT

By Brian Genest
VALLEY PATRIOT DRACUT COLUMNIST

'Tis the season to count your blessings and there are plenty of reasons to be grateful in Dracut.

Strong town government is at the top of the list. Things have been going well in Dracut and it's not by accident. It's because the right people have been in charge of town government.

Thanks to the leadership of Town Manager Ann Vandal, who took over the job four years ago, Dracut is in better shape than it has been in quite some time. Town finances are in solid shape. School spending is on the rise. Capital improvement projects are being worked on all over town. There's continuing efforts to balance growth and development with open space, preservation, and conservation. There's an ongoing focus on economic development, including bringing in new businesses and supporting existing ones. Morale at town hall is high. People in town are optimistic about our future.

In her annual performance review in October, Vandal scored a 3.9 out of 5. Her high score from Selectmen again this year is reflective of her consistent on-the-job performance and the fact that Dracut is in good shape overall right now.

Make no mistake about it: Our success is due to Vandal's leadership, her staff of department heads, and all the town employees. Our success is due to clear direction from the decisive majority on the Board of Selectmen. Our success is due to strong support from the townspeople. Seeing Dracut be successful as the result of strong leadership is something we can all truly appreciate.

Here's something else you may appreciate: At a recent Tri-Board meeting about town finances and potential future budget deficits with the Board of Selectmen, School Committee, and members of the Finance Committee, accusations flew, tempers flared, and emotions ran high. Vandal, on the other hand, stayed calm, cool, and collected during the discussion, telling board members nothing had changed since the previous Tri-Board meeting: town finance officials are currently estimating a $2.2 million budget deficit for the 2025 fiscal year, but that figure is fluid and far from final. Vandal said there is no way to determine whether there will be a deficit or what the amount could be, based on the information available right now.

She refused to give into the bullying, browbeating, and belligerence from some who wanted her to name a list of potential budget cuts.

"I'm not going to sit here and say, 'We're going to do this, we're going to do that, and cut this and cut that.' I won't do that, until we have to," Vandal said.

In other words, we can also be thankful for Vandal's commonsense and patience when it comes to handling town finances and business.

A strong Police Department that enjoys strong support from the community is another blessing.

Here's one recent example: Thanks to a thorough and diligent investigation by the Dracut Police Department, organized sporting events and large gatherings have been shut down at 167 Betty Ann Lane. There's no more cheering crowds, no more cars racing up and down the street and no more illegal sales of food and beer. Instead, there's peace and quiet once again in that residential neighborhood because police investigated appropriately and solved the problem. The neighbors on Betty Ann Lane and all of us should be appreciative of the efforts by our police to resolve the matter effectively.

The police protect and serve our community in many ways. Another example is the Dracut Public Safety Night that was held in June. For the second year in a row, the Dracut Police Department hosted an overwhelmingly successful event where hundreds of town residents came to enjoy the festivities, interact with law enforcement officials, and show their support for our police and other first responders. It was a good reminder to be thankful for the good things that happen in Dracut all year long, thanks to teamwork, public-private partnerships, and hometown pride.

Happy Thanksgiving!

— Brian Genest is the producer and host of Eye on Dracut, winner of the Hometown Media Award for News, sponsored by Lucky Oil. Watch the monthly show on DATV Channel 8 in Dracut or online anytime at DracutTV.org. ◊

Airman Jack Teixeira, A Hero to Many, a Traitor to Some

Louis Yarid
VALLEY PATRIOT COMMUNIST COLUMNIST

Yes, it is true that Airman Jack Douglas Teixeira of Massachusetts 102nd Intelligence Wing of the National Guard broke the US Code of Military Laws section 18 subsections 1924 & 793 (b &d) as his United States District Court Criminal Complaint states for the record from April 14th of this year, however not much is being reported about the information he leaked. Following the criminal complaint, it was revealed why the US Military was singling out a mere Air National Guardsman of Massachusetts. On or about February 28th this year, from his home in Bristol, MA, Teixeira leaked approximately 660 top secret documents on his Discord account: an online forum for sharing information specifically for gamers.

Because the servers are not secure, Russian gamers who also happened to be drafted hackers for the Russian Army were listening in on the whole thing when he revealed that the Ukrainian Army was down to only 20,000 men & women in February, whilst NATO troop count had only just reached over 1.2 million men & women to prop up the failed fascist state. The Ukrainians were and still are reinforced by only about 5,000 Ukrainian American members of the Special Forces trained by the Green Berets, whose efforts and losses are not being reported to us, futile as they may be.

Ukraine is a fascist nation due to the fact that they have founded 12 proudly Fascist parties since their independence as a violent threat to Russia next door who has had a ban on Fascist parties since Stalin. They have almost all garnered a reputation in the Ukrainian Military by most of them joining the Azov Battalion named after an old volunteer Ukrainian Nazi sympathizer militia. Altogether, their 12 parties formed a coalition known as the Right Sector. Once united, they caused the Euromaidan Uprising in 2014, & they destroyed President Yanukovich's popularity and approval rating. Eventually the violence forced Yanukovich to use the entire Ukrainian Military to regain control of the major cities, diverting them away from the Russian border.

This made it easy for Russian forces to funnel supplies & weapons into Eastern Ukraine to arm the people for the upcoming vendetta that was sure to be imposed against Russian Ukrainians and Crimean Tartars who are one of the only minorities in Russia as Muslims in a predominantly Orthodox country. They are so respected by the international community, when the people of Crimea voted by referendum to become an Autonomous Independent Republic of the Russian Federation, the entire UN including President Obama agreed to their right to do so, but not Donetsk or Luhansk.

Now Volodymir Zelensky is President of Ukraine, and when he took office in 2019, he made the biggest mistake of his life by denying Donetsk & Luhansk their rights to independence & self-determination by continuing the policies of President Porochenko just before him who for 5 years had been sending Ukrainian soldiers (including the Azov Battalion) into Donetsk & Luhansk with orders to kill all separatists… thousands of Russian Ukrainian citizens have been killed in the process since 2014.

Zelensky perpetuated the killing because, desperate to join, NATO told him that Ukraine would not be able to join whilst parts of his nation were breaking away, he had no choice but to keep killing his own people in order to even have a chance of joining NATO. However, since 2014, the entire Donbas region has been known as the modern-day Stalingrad holding out against these fascists with sniper-fire depicted in the movie "A Sniper's War." Now on the front lines, due to the leaked information, since March, the Russian Army has been constantly pushing their final sweep as they scramble to hunt down and neutralize the remaining 20,000 Ukrainian soldiers in order to force NATO out of Ukraine. Within the first 3 months, Russian State Media declared that they had cut the Ukrainian military down to only 12,000 troops.

This happened to spark the recent overstated Wagner Group Rebellion led by Yevgeny Prigozhin who had been complaining for months about his group's heavy losses from achieving the result of cutting the Ukrainians down to almost nothing after man-to-man fighting on the front lines. Prigozhin only led the rebellion to secure better treatment for the members of the Wagner Group before quitting with loyal members of the group who stay with him in Belarus.

All of this recent news on the front lines has been due to the information leaked by Airman Jack Douglas Teixeira of Bristol, MA who despite being a lowly 21-year-old Air National Guardsman, has changed history and the outcome of our generation's most pointless war. Because of him, Ukraine is down to approximately 5,000 troops by now, and that means more than 50,000 US soldiers are exempt from risking their lives in No-Man's Land… Ukraine is becoming part of Russia, and there is nothing anyone can do to stop that, so we as a country must truly prevent ourselves from getting into anymore messy unwinnable wars like Vietnam, because Ukraine is beginning to look like Saigon did in 1975. Teixeira is a hero to the people of the world and this country for saving more American lives from being wasted. He is already being hailed by Russian State Media as a hero to the people of Russia and their army. For all the crap Airman Teixeira is getting, I believe he deserves a pat on the back and a huge thank you from his fellow countrymen and the people of his community in Bristol, MA. We should all be proud of him for sharing that information as we were when Eric Snowden did.

True American heroes are the ones amongst us willing to tell the truth in order to prevent the worst possible things from happening. If he hadn't leaked the info, we Americans would be attending daily funerals for American soldiers lost in Ukraine.

By Lou Yarid III

Member of the CPUSA, TMF, MCNAA, IATSE, & resident of Methuen, MA ◊

Psychological Center Honors 7 People, Raises $50K for Community Programs

Carinia Pappalardo
CEO - PSYCHOLOGICAL CENTER

LAWRENCE — Last month, the Greater Lawrence Psychological Center, Inc., hosted approximately 200 people at their 5th-annual Overcoming Obstacles Gala at Salvatore's Italian Restaurant in Lawrence. I first want to thank Michael Agricola and Phillip Wood, (owners of Salvatore's) for donating their food and space for this event.

The gala raised approximately $50,000 to support the center's programs:

The Psychological Center cares for individuals through three programs dedicated to addiction and recovery services: Pegasus House, Women's View, and the Day-break Shelter. The programs focus on improving mental health and recovery from substance abuse disorders, which help individuals gain the skills necessary to reintegrate back into the community and live better lives.

Seven local heroes were honored at gala for helping others overcome obstacles. "It was a true privilege to honor well-deserving community members who understand the importance of helping individuals in need overcome obstacles," the center's CEO Carina Pappalardo said.

"We are committed to making a difference with respect and dignity while empowering individuals."

This year's honorees were:

TOM DUGGAN

Tom's remarkable journey as an intrepid journalist and devoted community advocate has left an indelible mark on the Merrimack Valley, earning him a well-deserved place in the spotlight. With a career spanning over three decades, Tom boasts a rich tapestry of experience that encompasses the realms of politics, campaign management, marketing, and media strategy. He has a remarkable talent for crafting compelling speeches, possesses a commanding presence as a public speaker, and is well-versed in the intricacies of radio, television, and print media.

Tom's expertise extends to crisis management, where he has offered invaluable guidance to individuals suddenly thrust into the public eye due to scandals or media scrutiny.

Today, Tom's primary objective is to propel The Valley Patriot newspaper to new heights, solidifying its reputation as a trusted source of news and information within the region.

Additionally, he has again made himself available for public speaking engagements, where he passionately addresses pivotal subjects such as media relations, crisis management, the intricate dynamics between law enforcement and the media, strategies to enhance community engagement, and the pivotal role of a motivated workforce as an influential public relations asset.. Tom Duggan's enduring commitment to truth, justice, and philanthropy resonates deeply with the spirit of our gala. He has also become a homeless advocate in the community.

JUAN "MANNY" GONZALEZ

Juan "Manny" Gonzalez, a dedicated Lawrence firefighter for 26 years, is the co-founder of Heal Lawrence, a grassroots organization offering vital aid to fire and disaster victims.

He plays a pivotal role in coordinating temporary housing, donation drives, and volunteer efforts for local organizations. Manny's compassion extends to humanitarian missions, including support for Hurricanes Maria and Fiona victims in Puerto Rico. We're excited to honor him for his outstanding contributions at the Gala. His full-time dedication to Heal Lawrence has been instrumental in its progress since the Easter fires of 2020.

Manny led the development of a Fire Protocol that mobilizes support immediately at the fire scene. This collaborative effort engages local authorities, nonprofits, and community resources to help affected families rebuild their lives. Heal Lawrence's impact has extended beyond Lawrence to nearby communities. Manny's commitment is unwavering as he strives to establish emergency protocols for displaced residents, recognizing the urgent need for such assistance.

WENDY LUZON

Wendy Luzon, a dedicated Lawrence resident for over 25 years and a successful business owner, is deeply committed to her community.

Born in the Dominican Republic, she moved to the U.S. as a teenager in search of a better life. Today, Wendy, along with her husband Raul, calls Lawrence home, where they raised their family, instilling values of hard work, community service, and faith. As the owner of "Casabe Fruit Store & Delicatessen" and "El Caldero Restaurant," Wendy actively contributes to the local economy and provides job opportunities for Lawrence residents. Beyond her businesses, she's an advocate for social justice.

Wendy co-founded Delamano, an organization dedicated to eliminating domestic violence, and launched the annual Festival de Teatro to preserve the arts in the community. Currently serving as the President of La Federacion Hispana de Comerciantes, a Chamber of Commerce supporting small businesses in Lawrence, Wendy is deeply invested in the city's economic development.

JESSICA PHILLIPS

Jessica Philips is a shining example of unwavering commitment to community service, as one of the distinguished honorees at the upcoming Overcoming Obstacles Gala.

Her remarkable journey is a testament to the transformative power of selfless dedication and humility. Jessica's indomitable spirit shines through her involvement on the boards of numerous nonprofit organizations and her tireless volunteer efforts in support of local causes.

In her professional role at Enterprise Bank, she goes above and beyond, offering invaluable additional support to these vital organizations. Yet, what truly sets Jessica apart is her genuine desire to make a difference, a motivation that remains untouched by the allure of recognition or praise. Her selfless dedication and humility are beacons of inspiration, serving as a potent reminder of the profound impact that one individual can have on a community. Jessica Philips stands as a remarkable role model, embodying the values of service, compassion, and community.

STEPHANIE MESSINA SEWADE:

Stephanie Messina Sewade, a partner at LukeJackson, leads their Human Resource Consulting practice, bringing two decades of experience in assisting employers of all scales.

Stephanie holds an MBA in Human Resource Management from the University of Massachusetts-Lowell, a B.A. in Mathematics from Merrimack College, North Andover, MA, and a SHRM-CP Professional Certification from the Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM).

Her dedication extends beyond her profession, as she is currently a member of the Board of Directors for the Psychological Center. She is known as the "Fairy Godmother" of the Psychological Center's Pegasus House program, where she brings joy to the guests through her generous charitable contributions and unwavering support. Stephanie has also contributed her leadership to organizations like the Greater Lawrence YWCA and the Haverhill Boys & Girls Club. She is an active member of professional associations such as the Greater Merrimack Valley Human Resource Association, Merrimack Valley Chamber of Commerce, and the New England Employee Benefits Council. We honor Stephanie for her unwavering commitment to her community and her outstanding achievements in her field.

PENNY HAMEL

With 20+ years in the financial industry, Penny Hamel is Vice President and Mortgage Loan Officer at Bangor Savings Bank. She holds a Summa Cum Laude Bachelor of Science degree from Merrimack College. Penny's achievements include Massachusetts Housing Originator of the Year in 2013 and 2015 and Northeast Realtor Association Business Partner of the Year in 2007, 2015, and 2022. Penny is deeply engaged in her community, generously giving her time and expertise to several nonprofits. Notably, she serves on the board of the Psychological Center, which supports the Daybreak Shelter. For nearly three decades, Penny has been an active member of the Westford Rotary Club. Additionally, she holds positions on the Board of Directors for the Merrimack Valley Food Bank and the American Lebanese Awareness Association. Beyond her professional life, Penny enjoys outdoor activities, volunteering for the Aussie Rescue, and dog training.

ZORAIDA ROSADO

Zoraida is the VP & Co-Founder of Somos Green Innovations and the President & CEO of the non-profit The Green Evolution Corporation. Both companies help communities live more sustainably.

She has a love for humanitarian work, donating her time to help others progress while providing resources to help families grow and prosper. Zoraida's expertise is empowering individuals to do more than what they believe they can do, educating and guiding them to become independent, and creating a path toward prosperity by providing the resources to reach that goal. Knowledge is power, and she believes that anyone can do anything they set their mind to do if they have the right resources and guidance. Opportunities are everywhere, you just need to know where to look.

The Psychological Center would like to offer a very special thank you to lead sponsors:

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- Enterprise Bank
- Gomez & Palumbo, LLC Attorneys at Law
- The Green Evolution Corporation ◊

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City of Lawrence Mayor Brian Depena Announces ...

EMERGENCY PARKING BAN: Alternate Parking on Certain Streets between 12:01 AM to 6AM

The winter alternate parking ordinance shall only take effect during the dates and times specified in a "SNOW AND ICE EMERGENCY" issued by the Mayor or his/her designee, The snow emergency shall remain in effect until the Mayor rescinds it. Notice of any such rescission shall be given in the same manner as the issuance of the declaration.

Winter Alternate Parking shall mean that on the following streets, between the hours of 12:01 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., daily, vehicles shall, unless otherwise prohibited by law, be parked on one side of the street only, so that on the even-numbered dates of the calendar, vehicles shall be parked on the even-numbered sides of the streets, and on the odd-numbered dates of the calendar, they shall be parked on the odd-numbered sides of the streets: ORD 10.36.031 (*IF YOUR STREET IS NOT LISTED BELOW, NO PARKING IS ALLOWED*)

Abbott St
Allen St (*General St To Angle)*
Allston St.
Ames St. *(Riverside Dr. to Haverhill St*
Amesbury St
Amherst St
Appleton St
Atkinson St
Auburn St
Bailey St
Ballard St
Barker St
Barnard St
Basswood St
Bay State Rd *(McFarlin St to Mater St)*
Beacon St
Beaconsfield St
Belknap St
Bellevue St
Bennett St
Bennington St (*Auburn St to Chestnut St)*
Beresford St
Berkeley St
Bigelow St
Blanchard St
Bodwell St
Bowdoin St
Boxford St
Bradford St
Brookfield St
Bruce St
Burke St
Burlington St
Butler St
Byron Ave
Cabot Rd
Cambridge St
Canal St
Canterbury St
Carleton St (Andover St to Everett St)
Carver St
Castle St
Cedar St
Chandler St
Chester St *(*So. Bway. To Dunstable St.)
Chestnut St
Chickering St *(Cutler St. to Pilgrim Rd.)*
Cleveland St
Clifton St
Clinton St
Colonial Dr
Colonial Rd
Colonial Terrace
Columbus Ave *(Haverhill St to Meadow St)*
Concord St
Congress St
Coolidge St
Copley St
County St
Crescent St
Crestwood Cir
Crosby St
Cross St
Cutler St (Chickering St to Marlboro St)
Cyr Drive
Dana St
Danforth St
Dartmouth St
Davis St.
Debbie Lane
Dorchester St
Dracut St (*So. Bway to Dunstable St)*
Dunstable St
Durham St
Durso Ave
East Boxford St
East Boxford Terrace
East Haverhill St
East Kingston St
East Pleasant St
East St
Easton St (*So. Bway to Jefferson St)*
Eastside St
Eaton St
Ellis St
Elm St
Emerald Ave.
Erving Ave
Eutaw St
Everett St
Exeter Pl
Exeter St
Exeter Terrace
Fairmont St
Fallon St
Falmouth St
Farley St
Farnham St
Ferry St
Ferguson St
Forest St
Foster St
Foxcroft St
Franklin St
Frost Dr
Furber St
Garden St
Garfield St (*Cambridge St to Falmouth St)*
Gilbert St
Glenn St
Glenwood Drive
Gorham St
Grafton St
Grainger St
Grant Rd
Green St
Greenfield St
Greenwood St
Groton St
Grove St
Hamlet St
Hancock St
Hawley St
High St (*Except E. Haverhill St to Ferry St)*
Highgate St
Hillside Ave
Howard St
Hudson Ave
Hurst St
Inman St
Jamaica St
Jefferson St
Juniper St. (*For its entire length on Odd Side of street (East Side only during effective period.)*
Kenneth St
Kent St
Kingston St
Laurel St
Lea St
Lebanon St *(Hampshire St to Amesbury St)*
Leeds Ter.
Lenox Circle
Lenox St
Lincoln Ct
Lisa Lane
Lorenzo Rd
Loring Street
Louisburgh St
Lowell St (Lawrence St to W. Lowell St)
Lynn St
Manchester St
Maple St
Margin St
Marie Lane
Marion Ave (except Holly St to Spicket River)
Marique Dr
Mark Lane
Market St
Marlboro St
Marston St
Martha Lane
Mason St
May St
Medford St
Melrose St
Melvin St
Middlebury St *(Olive Ave to Endicott St)*
Mill St
Milton St (*Haverhill St to Bodwell St)*
Monroe St
Morton St
Mt. Auburn St
Mt. Vernon Cir
Mt. Vernon St
Mt. Vernon Terrace
Newbury St
Newton St
No. Parish Rd
Oak St (*East Haverhill to Short St)*
Oakland Rd
Olive Ave (*W. Lowell St to Ames St)*
Orchard St
Osgood St
Oxford St
Packard St
Patton St
Pembroke Dr
Perry Ave
Philips St
Pilgrim Rd
Pleasant St (*Ferry St to High St)*
Portland St
Powers St
Proctor Rd
Prospect St
Providence St
Railroad St
Richmond St
Rita Lane
Roberta Lane
Rockwood Lane
Rowe St
Russell St
Salem St
Sanborn St
Sargent St
School St
Shattuck St
Shawsheen Rd
Sheridan St
Shepard St
Short St (Chestnut to Maple St)
So. Bowdoin St
Sparkle Drive
Springfield St
Standish Rd
Stevens St (*Mt.Vernon St to Stevens Ave)*
Storrow St
Summer St
Summit Ave
Swan St
Sylvester St
Taft St
Temple St
Tewksbury St
Thomas Rd
Tremont St
Tyler St
Valley St
Vandergrift St
Walnut St
Warren St
Water St
Weare St
West Hawley St
West Kenneth St
Westchester Drive
Westwood Terrace
White St
Whitman St
Wilmot St
Winston Dr
Winter St
Woodland St
Wyman St

ON THE FOLLOWING STREETS BETWEEN 12:01 AM AND 6:00 AM, MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY, ALTERNATE PARKING WILL BE ENFORCED YEAR-ROUND: ORD 10.36.190

Ames St, from Haverhill St. to Water St.
Andover St
Arlington St, from Broadway to the Methuen Line.
Broadway, from the Methuen Line to Canal St.
Canal St, from Prospect Street to Union St.
Common St.
East Haverhill St, from Steiner St. to Avon St.
Eastside St, entire length.
Essex St.
Ferry St, from Marston St to East Haverhill St.
General Street, from Prospect Street to Union Street.
Hampshire St, from Lawrence St to Arlington St
Hampshire St, from Myrtle St to Canal St.
Hampshire St, from Canal St to Arlington St.
Haverhill St, except from Jackson St to Amesbury St and Broadway.
Jackson St, from Canal St to Kendrick St and from Berkeley Street to Methuen Line.
Lawrence St.
Lowell St, from Ames St to Lawrence St.
Market St, from Loring Street to Parker St.
Merrimack St.
Methuen St, from Broadway to Amesbury St.
Methuen St, from Lawrence St to Union St.
Parker St, from Andover St to Merrimack St
Prospect St, from the Methuen Line to Canal St.
Salem St, from Emmett St to Shawsheen Road, with the exception of that portion of Salem St., between Newton St and Everett St.)
Salem St, from Emmett St to South Union St.
South Broadway
South Union St.
Tremont St, from Hampshire St to West St.
Union St.
Water St, from Ames St to Broadway.
West St.
Winthrop Avenue, from Chickering St to Parker St.

The provisions of this section shall not apply to the portions of the following streets which are designated as State highways:

Jackson Street, north of Berkley Street to Methuen Line-Route 110.
Riverside Drive, west of Ames Street to the Methuen Line.
Winthrop Avenue, from the junction of Osgood Street south to Interstate 495.

ALL NIGHT PARKING PERMITTED AT THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS:

Exterior of **BREEN SCHOOL** – Yard only
CARL LINDQUIST PLAYGROUND –Emmett Street side only
CHARLES STORROW PARK –High Street side only from Pleasant Street southerly to Storrow Terrace
JAMES F. LEONARD SCHOOL PLAYGROUND –South side
ARLINGTON SCHOOL –Arlington Street
Exterior of LAHEY SCHOOL – Yard only
Exterior of ROLLINS SCHOOL – Platt Street only
PARTHUM SCHOOL – Playground area to E. Haverhill Street

It is very important that motorist cooperate and remove their vehicles out of all public areas no later than 7:00 A.M... All vehicles will be towed away at the OWNER'S EXPENSE who fails to comply with the above time schedule. Also, all vehicles immobilized by accident, mechanical, uninsured or uninspected left on all city owned land will be towed at OWNER'S EXPENSE. Any questions, call 978-620-3090 or 978-620-3350.

–Jorge Jaime, Director of DPW

(REVISED DATE 11-16-21)

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Solomon Booked on Criminal Charges

After multiple county, state, and federal grand juries have exonerated Former Methuen Police Chief Joe Solomon on criminal charges, Methuen Mayor Neil Perry and members of the Methuen City Council were finally able to pull enough political strings to get an indictment against Solomon last month.

Oddly enough, there were no charges or indictments over a "criminal police contract" as promised by City Councilors and Solomon critics. Last month, Methuen Captain Greg Gallant won his civil service case and found not guilty of any wrongdoing regarding that police contract that city officials called "criminal".

Solomon was charged by the new Essex County District Attorney Paul Tucker, after the former D.A. (Jon Blodgett) refused to charge him after three years of investigating.

At issue, Solomon is being criminally charged with illegally hiring former police officer Sean Fountain, even though it was Mayor Zanni who hired Fountain after a vote of the city council, a unanimous vote of the state legislature, and Governor Baker signing off on Fountain's hire.

According to the Methuen City Charter the police chief has no authority to hire police officers - that authority is left to the mayor.

Solomon is also being charged with forging Fountain's graduation certificate from the police academy, when documents show that it was (then Captain) Randy Hagar who conducted and approved Foutain's background check, not Chief Solomon.

Hagar was then given a promotion to a newly created position of Deputy Police Chief, making almost as much as Solmon was making when he was Chief of Police. This, despite the fact that Methuen City Councilors called Solomon's salary "criminal."

As for the forgery charges, no evidence has been provided to the public or any of the previous grand juries - by any agency that has investigated Solomon - to show that he forged anything.

In fact, Fountain is actually being charged with forging his own certificate.

Sources from the Massachusetts Police Academy have said on the record that no documents exist to show who did, and who did not graduate from the police academy making it nearly impossible to determine that Fountain did not attend the academy in the first place.

Solomon has admitted that he called people at the police academy to see if he could get a replacement certificate at the time because Fountain claimed he lost the original.

City councilors who have driven this four-year-long endeavor to get Joe Solomon charged criminally took victory laps in the Boston press after the charges were announced last month. ◊

KANE'S KORNER ~ Western Avenue Studios

KANE
VALLEY PATRIOT MASCOT/COLUMNIST

Described as the "Creative Soul of Lowell" houses more than 350 artists under its roof (westernavenuestudios.com). Kane was very intrigued to learn more about the space because not only can you rent a working space as an artist, but you could also live in an artist loft within a community of fellow creative beings. Kane learned that many of the artists include teachers and professors throughout the greater Boston area. Each artist has mastered the craft of running a small business inspired by a community that celebrates and fosters creativity.

Western Ave Studios is located in the Pawtucket Canal in a 5-building complex of 265,000 square feet of converted mill space. In 2005 Western Ave Studios opened its doors to 33 art studios and art businesses. Since 2012 Western Ave Studios is 100%. occupied by art studios, businesses, and artist lofts. Kane was excited to learn that not only could you purchase art but many studios offer the opportunity to learn a craft through lessons with the resident artists. Kane always wanted to take painting lessons, so he is looking into opportunities.

When Kane arrived for open studios, it was packed. In fact, he had no idea where he was going to park his car. What is really cool is that dogs are allowed in the buildings to visit. Open studios is an excellent way to browse the hallways to get to know the community.

For those of us that are not creative in that way, the work is very eye opening and inspiring. Kane was blown away by the number of different medias and as a side note many artists put out snacks. Kane loves snacks. He was reminded that snacks were for everyone and not just him.

Kane visited photography studios, sculpture, painting, wood working, metal works, jewelry making, and glass blowing to name a few. Having a long tail Kane stuck to looking at the displays at Mill City Glass Works, lots of delicate and breakable pieces of art in there. Sometimes Kane isn't as coordinated as he would like to be, a German Shepherd needs to know his limitations.

Besides the artist spaces is the novel idea of housing artists in the loft residence which affords the opportunity to work where you live in this creative community. The 50 lofts spaces range in size from 790 square feet to 1660 square feet. These are artist only spaces. Potential residents are required to document 3 years of artistic production. Resident artists display their creative works in a community gallery within the building.

There is also a gallery on the first floor of Western Ave Studios called Loading Dock Gallery. This gorgeous gallery displays an eclectic variety of different works of art by the artists that rent workspace within the studio.

Visiting the gallery and open studios is a great way to support small businesses in the local area. On his way out Kane visited the Navigation Brewery, also dog friendly, to have a beer with the local guys.

Kane plans to visit the Open Studios again on November 25th for small business Saturday for the Artist market and December 2nd for Open Studios to get some Christmas shopping done. So if supporting small business and shopping local is a priority for you come check it out. There is a lot to like about Lowell and Western Ave Studios.

Kane Peaslee, Woof
Columnist Valley Patriot ◊

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Methuen Village Lifetime Achievement Award

Residents of Methuen Village since February, Larry and Ann DeAngelis, were recently celebrated with a Lifetime Achievement Award. Raised in Stoneham, Ann worked at Grants Department Store during high school and enjoyed going to dances. In fact, it was at a dance at the Greenwood School in Wakefield that Ann met Larry! Larry was from Wakefield, served in the National Guard, and was an Electrolux salesman until retirement. Larry and Ann were married in 1951 and raised their five children in Stoneham. At Methuen Village, they share their apartment with their cat Nahla! They enjoy many of the community activities especially socials, movies, outings, and happy hour.

Senior Living Residences created the Lifetime Achievement Award Program in 2010 to offer an antidote to the isolation and anonymity experienced by individuals with memory loss. It was so well received and beloved by everyone involved in the process – residents, their families, our staff, and outside referral partners – that we expanded it beyond our Compass Memory Support Neighborhoods to all residents in our Assisted Living communities. Throughout the last decade thousands of seniors living in an SLR community have received this special award of personal recognition. ◊

Lawrence Mayor Brian DePena with Valley Patriot Publisher Tom Duggan and Massachusetts State Auditor Diana DiZoglio

Tom Duggan Bestowed Overcoming Obstacles Award

By: Santiago Reyes Cruz, Jr.

Fresh out of the hospital from a life-threatening illness, Valley Patriot publisher Tom Duggan was presented with one of the most prestigious awards in the Merrimack Valley last month, the Greater Lawrence Psychological Center's Overcoming Obstacles Award.

(see story on page 9).

Most people may know that Tom feeds the homeless, brings them needed items like blankets, food, and hand warmers - but, what you may not know is that Tom has twice been homeless himself.

He is also the son of a murdered Lawrence police officer and has spent most of his adult life quietly helping families of other slain officers.

Having waited 11 years to go to college because he couldn't afford it, Tom Duggan now uses the success of the Valley Patriot to raise tens of thousands of dollars each year to give scholarships to local students.

Being the son of a Vietnam-era veteran and grandson of a WWII vet, Tom works with Clear Path for Veterans New England to get homeless veterans off the streets and provide them with needed services.

As the publisher of this newspaper, he has survived boycotts, had his character assassinated by powerful politicians, and even targeted for physical violence because of his reporting on crime issues.

If there was anyone who deserves an "Overcoming Obstacles" award this year, it is my boss - and friend - Tom Duggan who always uses the obstacles he faces to learn life lessons and then help others who have their own obstacles to overcome.

Congratulations Tom and thank you to Carina Pappalardo for recognizing Tom's success and his struggles! ◊

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Resume of Lawrence's Acting Police Chief William Castro

Last month, Lawrence Mayor Brian DePena appointed for law enforcement officer William Castro to be the acting police chief. Castro was DePena's chief of staff and immediately came under fire from city councilors and city council candidates for being a "political appointment". One candidate even posted on Facebook that Castro had no experience in law enforcement and his appointment was "corrupt".

"First of all, all government appointments are political," Castro said. "Local government is run by politicians; they make the decisions and every police and fire chief is appointed by an elected official."

Just a few days after being appointed, Castro appeared on the Paying Attention! Podcast with Valley Patriot publisher Tom Duggan and presented his Law Enforcement resume live, on the air and asked if we would publish it to silence those who are publicly claiming he has no qualifications to be chief.

WILLIAM CASTRO
WILLCASTRO427@GMAIL.COM

An accomplished law enforcement professional, with a supportive human service background and participatory leadership style prepared to introduce new concepts, strategies that focuses on building positive relationship between the Lawrence Police Department, and the Community.

• Over 25 years of experience in varied Law Enforcement responsibilities

• Experience managing, and supervising

• Ability to work independently or in a team setting

• Experience working with individuals from diverse ethnic backgrounds

• Considerable expertise in Federal, State, and local multijurisdictional law enforcement collaboration and community engagement

• Ability to communicate effectively across a multicultural environment

• Committed to diversity, transparency and inclusion in support of an equitable police force

• Bilingual language proficiency – English/Spanish

EMPLOYMENT

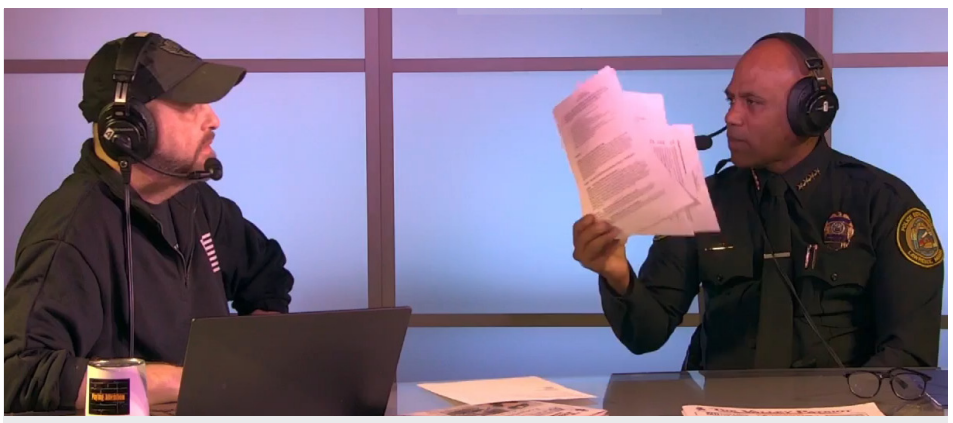
2023-Present City of Lawrence, Mayor's Office Chief of Staff

Responsible for supervising and managing the daily operations of the Mayor's office as well as assisting the Mayor to implement policy initiatives, programs, contracts, grants, expenditures, policies, and regulations. Be accountable for managing and overseeing the Mayor's budget ensuring operation within its allocated funds. Participate in union contract negotiations and grievances. Serve as a critical member of the Mayor's team, playing an essential role as a liaison between the Mayor's office, and other city officials including department heads, nonprofit organizations, community stakeholders, city council members, and state delegation.

1999-2023 Essex County's Sherriff's Department-Held various positions as described below:

2019-2023 ECSD Criminal Investigator/ DEA HIDA Task Force

Drug Enforcement Administration-HIDA Manchester New Hampshire Regional Office. A Criminal Investigator in charge of the enforcement of the Controlled Substances Act, as well as investigations of the highest level of domestic and international Drug Trafficking Organizations, Gangs and Terrorisms. Responsibilities include but not limited to conduct federally funded court-authorized wire, surveillance, acting in an undercover capacity, debrief defendants/confidential informants, write investigative confidential reports, operational plan reports, execute operational plans, search and seizure warrants, investigations, arrests, testify and ensure the safety of other Law Enforcement Officials and most important the Public.



Acting Lawrence Police Chief William Castro appeared on the Paying Attention! Podcast with Tom Duggan last month to defend his record as a law enforcement officer. You can see the video in the "video" tab of the Valley Patriot Facebook Page. Or search "Studio21 Podcast Cafe" on YouTube

2017-2019 ECSD Criminal Investigator/ Lawrence Police Task Force

Assigned to the Warrant Apprehension Unit and Lawrence Police Department Gang Task Force. Responsible for investigating security threat groups (Gangs) and disrupting criminal activity.

2016-2017 ECSD Pre Release Center Criminal Investigator

Assigned to the ECSD Pre-Release Center and responsible for the implementation of post order, unit rules and regulation and conduct criminal investigations. Ensure the safety of the Public, Staff and Inmates.

2005-2016 ECSD Criminal Investigator/ Drug Enforcement Administration-Promoted

Criminal Investigator, assigned to the Drug Enforcement Administration and the Methuen Police Department Drug/Gang Unit. Served as an undercover Task Force Agent for 11 years and responsible for record seizures of Fentanyl, Heroin, Crystal Methamphetamine, Cocaine, MDMA pills and millions in U.S Currency.

2002-2005 ECSD Sergeant – Promoted

Supervisor of the Special Management Unit (SMU)

Responsible for Officer's evaluations, climate/incident/informational reports/use of force, disciplinary reports, field-training officer, mentor to new and veteran officers and instrumental in the implementation of unit rule and regulations, post orders, policy and procedures. Member of the Warrant, Tactical, Apprehension Team and OIC of the Primary Response Team.

1999-2002 Essex County Sheriff's Department (ECSD) and Correctional Facility

Officer, assigned to the Infirmary Unit. Responsible for inmate accountability the implementation of unit rules, regulation, post orders, policy and procedures. Ensure the safe running of the institution, the safety of staff and the public.

1997-1999 Defense Government Service – Internal Revenue Service

Corporal Security Supervisor, responsible for the safety of federal property and its employees. Reviewing post orders, policy and procedures.

TRAINING/CERTIFICATE/ CERTIFICATIONS

1995 Massachusetts Class A License to Carry Firearm

1996 Massachusetts Criminal Justice Training Council. The Northeast Regional Police Institute "Suicide Prevention, Intervention and Detection, Tactical Handcuffing, Handgun Retention, OC-Aerosol, CPR and First Responder"

1999 The Psychological Center "Juvenile Counseling"

1999 Commonwealth of Massachusetts Basic Training Program in Correctional Practices

2002 Office of Emergency Management Services "Terrorism Preparedness"2005 United States Department of Justice Drug Enforcement Administration "DEA Narcotic Investigations"

2005 Multijurisdictional Counterdrug Task Force Training "Courtroom Testimony"

2006 Multijurisdictional Counterdrug Task Force Training "Conspiracy Investigations, Pharmaceutical Drug Investigations"

2007 Multijurisdictional Counterdrug Task Force Training "Criminal Street Gang Investigations, Current Drug Trends, Interviewing and Interrogation"

2007 United States Department of Transportation Commercial Motor Vehicle Criminal Interdiction "Rapid Risk Recognition, Assessment and Response"

2008 Multijurisdictional Counterdrug Task Force Training "Criminal Street Gangs Strategic Operations"

2010 Connecticut State Police Academy "Advance Concealed Compartment Course"

2011 West Virginia State Police/Drug Enforcement Administration "Certify Advance Concealed Compartment Instructor"

2014 Lowell Police Department Training Institute In-Service Training

2015 New England State Police "Criminal Investigation School"

2016 Methuen Police Department Defensive Tactics and Active Shooter

2018 Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) Certification

2019 Police Department Training Institute In-Service Training, ECSD In-Service and DEA tactical training

2020 Police Department Training Institute In-Service Training, ECSD In-Service and DEA tactical training

2021 Police Department Training Institute In-Service Training, ECSD In-Service and DEA tactical training

2022 Police Department Training Institute In-Service Training, ECSD In-Service and DEA tactical training

2022 Municipal Police Training Committee Bridge Academy Training Program

2023 Police Department Training Institute, Methuen Police Department In-Service training

COMMENDABLE ACTION LETTLE/ COMMENDATIONS/SPECIAL AWARDS

1995 Haverhill Police Department Appreciation Letter

1996 Haverhill Police Department Appreciation Letter

1997 Internal Revenue Service (IRS) two "Commendable Action Letters, Medical

CASTRO: PAGE 16

Stadium Chiropractic

NEW LOCATION! 2 DURSO AVE BEHIND TACO BELL IN LAWRENCE

Dr. John Armano is pleased to announce the opening of Stadium Chiropractic PC located at 2 Durso Ave in Lawrence, adjacent to the Registry of Motor Vehicles behind Taco Bell. Dr. John Armano has been serving the Merrimack Valley for the past 31 years specializing in injury rehab sports medicine, as well as pain management for acute and chronic conditions. Dr. Cindy Armano has been serving Boston's North shore for the past 31 years also specializing in injury rehab, as well as family care and nutritional counseling. PHONE: (508) 350-7036. Se Habla Espanol.

Lawrence's Record-breaking Economic Growth

For the second year in a row, Mayor Brian A. DePeña and City Councilors chose not to increase property taxes by the allowable Proposition 2.5 limitation, therefore, assuring the lowest split tax rates since 2007 and the third lowest in over two decades. The proposed FY2024 Residential Tax Rate is $9.28; this is a decrease of $.088 and the Commercial/ Industrial/Personal Property tax rate is $19.43; a decrease of $1.71.

The average single-family taxpayer in Lawrence pays $3,766 in property taxes and may potentially notice an annual property tax bill decrease of $47 dollars. In comparison to the statewide average single-family tax bill last year which was $6,719; this is a tax bill difference of $2,953.

The Fiscal Year 2024 (FY2024) property assessed values for local tax purposes were approved by the DOR at its full and fair cash value. Adjustments to assessments were made to reflect changes in the real estate market and changes to the tax base due to new construction, alterations, demolitions, etc. In FY24, the total taxable valuation in Lawrence reached an all-time historic high of $7.6B dollars; this is an increase of $764,416,940 dollars or an 11.1% increase surpassing the previous year's record high totals. The average single-family assessed value shattered last year's historic high valuation reaching $405,000 dollars.

Another great news is that on October 25, 2023, the Massachusetts Department of Revenue certified that the amount of available funds, or "free cash", as of July 1, 2023, for the City of Lawrence is $43,280,417. This is the largest free cash certified in the city's history.

Free cash results from the calculation, as of July 1, of a community's remaining unrestricted funds from operations of the previous fiscal year based on the balance sheet as of June 30. It typically includes actual receipts in excess of revenue estimates and unspent amounts in departmental budget line items for the year just ending, plus unexpended free cash from the previous year.

Also, the Lawrence Water and Sewer Department received its certified retained earnings from the Massachusetts Department of Revenue in the amount of $3.1 million dollars.

This is a significant improvement over the last fiscal year and is great news for the city. We are excited about the progress and the future of the department.

Mayor Brian A. DePeña would like to thank all city department heads and employees for their hard work and for their stewardship in managing city funds allowing for this record-free cash certification. ◊

Unceasingly Grateful

Philippe Thibault
VALLEY PATRIOT DRACUT COLUMNIST

Maybe it is the crisp air, the smell of fallen leaves, the sound of a crackling fire, the long shadows on midafternoon walks, or the plastic Santa Clauses that have been in stores since Labor Day, but this time of year brings out philanthropic qualities of goodwill that we should try to emulate throughout the year. While the world around us is haggard and tempest torn, there is one defense against this assailment. It is gratitude. Yes, there is trouble and strife in these times of woe and want. I have been the target of abuse by another "contributor" to this paper in the past and probably in this current edition. The bitterness of another will not detract me from the gratitude I have for those who show me kindness or better still show kindness to those they do not know.

There was a craft fair this Saturday morning held by an organization called End 68 Hours of Hunger. The mission of this group is to confront the sixty-eight hours of the weekend that children spend from the time they leave school on Friday to the time they return on Monday morning often in food insecurity. It is challenging work to provide a backpack to a child to pick up before the weekend starts. I can understand the anxiety there must be for a child and gratefully I have never experienced it. I have come to know Andrea Connelly, the programs coordinator for Dracut, as one of the community's angels. She truly does God's work.

All eyes in the Greater Lowell area are turning to the Annual Salvation Army Radiothon. Before it was even known as the Radiothon, it was Warren Shaw and Arthur Sutcliff on the Saturday Morning Live radio show asking people to donate money to the Lowell Salvation Army to aid in their mission in surrounding communities. Five thousand dollars was raised that first day some twenty-five years ago. The 2023 goal was set at one quarter of a million dollars. It would seem incredibly unrealistic to raise that sum on a Saturday morning. That is what makes the miracle so real. Warren still hosts the program on WCAP 980 AM with Gerry Nutter and Shawn Ashe. There are many behind the scenes that make the efforts look easy. The date is December 2nd starting at 6:00 am and going until they reach their goal. You quickly learn how generous the Merrimack Valey can be.

There are few things that defy the laws of physics that become greater when they are divided. Joy and gratitude are such entities. If you give joy and gratitude to another individual, it is never taken away or lost from yourself. The best way to make two people happy is to make someone else happy. It is that simple. I believe that is what is so endearing and enduring about the story of Ebeneezer Scrooge in A Christmas Carol. Through visitations of Christmas Spirits: past, present, and future. Scrooge realizes that trying to hoard what he thinks will make him happy creates misery. Only through giving of himself does he achieve true happiness and wealth.

I am grateful for the sacrifices that my parents made for me. They made do to provide what they felt their children should have: a good education and moral upbringing. I am truly humbled by their dedication and devotion to family and friends. My endeavor now is to pass those blessings along as best I can to the next generation of family, friends, and community. But for the Grace of God go I and I am unceasingly grateful. ◊

CASTRO: FROM PAGE 15

Emergency"
1999 Essex County Sheriff's Department "Life Saving" Commendable Action Letter
1999 Member of the Essex County Sheriff's Department Tactical Team
2000 Essex County Sheriff's Dept. Employee of the Month "In Recognition of Outstanding Performance of your Official Duties, Professionalism, and Positive Attitude"
2002 Certificate of Achievement in Recognition of the Promotion to the Rank of Sargent Supervisor
2003 City of Lawrence Official Citation "In Recognition of the many years of Dedicated Service, Beyond the Call of Duty to the Citizens of Lawrence"
2004 Commonwealth of Massachusetts House of Representatives Official Citation in recognition of " Your Many Years of Dedicated and Outstanding Service to the Essex County Sheriff's Department and to the Great City of Lawrence and the People of the Merrimack Valley"
2005 Certificate of Achievement in Recognition of the Promotion to the Position of Security Investigator
2005 Drug Enforcement Administration Certificate of Appreciation "For Outstanding Contributions in the Field of Drug Law Enforcement"
2005 New England Narcotic Narcotics Enforcement Officers' Association "Outstanding Contribution,
Dedication and Sacrifice given to the Citizens of New England through the Field of Narcotic Law Enforcement", Hyannis, Massachusetts
2009 New England Narcotic Narcotics Enforcement Officers' Association Certificate "Outstanding
Contribution, Dedication and Sacrifice given to the Citizens of New England through the Field of Narcotic Law Enforcement", Hyannis, Massachusetts
2009 New England Narcotic Enforcement Award "Outstanding Contribution, Dedication and Sacrifice given to the Citizens of New England through the Field of Narcotic Law Enforcement"
2010 New England Narcotic Enforcement Award "Outstanding Contribution, Dedication and Sacrifice given to the Citizens of New England through the Field of Narcotic Law Enforcement"
2011 Lowell Police Department Office of the Superintendent Police "Distinguished Unit Action Bar" for "Dedication and Commitment to the Lowell Police Department"
2012 U.S. Department of Justice/ Drug Enforcement Administration Commendation Letter for "His Commitment to Law Enforcement and the Essex County Sheriff's Department"
2013 Amesbury Police Department Commendation Letter "His extensive knowledge and skill at detecting and locating vehicle drug hides"
2014 Federal Executive Board of Boston "Excellence, Agent of the Year" award
2015 New England Narcotic Enforcement Award "Outstanding Contribution, Dedication and Sacrifice given to the Citizens of New England through the Field of Narcotic Law Enforcement", Portsmouth, New Hampshire
2016 Commonwealth of Massachusetts House of Representatives Official Citation in recognition of "His Many Years of Outstanding Service, Dedication and Sacrifice given to the City of Lawrence and to the People of the Merrimack Valley Through the field of Law Enforcement and Narcotic Investigations"
2016 Commonwealth of Massachusetts State Senate Official Citation, "In Recognition of: "Your
dedication to serving your community and commitment to improving the lives of people through the Commonwealth of Massachusetts"
2017 Commonwealth of Massachusetts House of Representatives Official Citation in recognition of "Your Commitment, Dedication and Hard Work for the Lawrence Community"
2017 City of Lawrence Hispanic Heritage Award, "Honoring your commitment and outstanding efforts
to enriching and educating the Hispanic community through public and community services"
2017 City of Lawrence Official Citation "In recognition of your value dedication, outstanding community service and continued commitment to A.A.C.P., Lawrence and the community it serves"
2017 Essex County Sheriff's Department Commendation "For his outstanding efforts while assigned to the City of Lawrence Warrant Apprehension Unit. Castro's outstanding professionalism, tireless work ethic, and communication skills exhibit a high level of dedication to duty. SI Castro is an exemplary representation of the Essex County Sheriff's Department to not only outside law enforcement but to the general public as well."
2019 Commonwealth of Massachusetts State Senate Official Citation, "In Recognition of: Your
extraordinary work in the community."
2019 Commonwealth of Massachusetts House of Representatives Official Citation, in recognition of
"Your service & selfless commitment to the Lawrence community and the youth of Sueños Basketball"
2022 National HIDA Awards Washington, DC "Outstanding Overdose Investigative Effort"
2023 City of Lawrence Official Citation "In recognition of your value dedication, outstanding community service and continued commitment to A.A.C.P.,
2023 City of Lawrence Hispanic Heritage Award, "Honoring your commitment and outstanding efforts to enriching and educating the Hispanic community through public and community services"
Volunteer Work
• Semana Hispana en Lawrence Inc.
• Sueños Basketball Lawrence, MA
• Methuen Open Space Recreational Advisory Committee under Mayor Perry
• Assistant coach for Methuen Youth Baseball
• Haverhill Police Department Auxiliary Police Officer

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Confronting Evil in a Dangerous Time of Appeasement

Kenneth Willette
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

The Squad—a radical cabal operating without reproach in the US House of Representatives-- is seeking a Congressional Resolution (CR) that would be equivalent to sending an unarmed social worker to resolve the genocidal actions of terrorists. How on God's green earth will a proposed cease fire even remotely address the deadly hostility of Hamas toward a multiethnic and democratically elected society such as Israel?

Because unequivocally embedded in the Hamas charter is a defined Final Solution that Hitler would easily recognize and endorse. Chanting 'From the River to the Sea' sounds frighteningly like Hitler's Jew-Free Europe manifesto. It has been roundly condemned by the Anti-Defamation League as anti-Jewish hate speech. Genocide is genocide regardless of the century. Hamas is only interested in total annihilation, not peaceful cohabitation. How does a cease fire release the hostages? It doesn't, and the Squad knows it. What is even scarier is that there are 13 co-sponsors—all left-leaning Democrats-- to this misguided and weak CR.

Federal law enforcement is still rightly concerned about the activities of the KKK, which reached its zenith before World War II. Out of a nationwide population of approximately 335 million people, there are only 3,000 KKK members. They must be ostracized and monitored due to their vile activities. According to the Department of Justice, there are roughly 3,500 Neo-Nazi sympathizers. Again, another group that must be constantly tracked and condemned.

Unfortunately, the more ominous shadow of racial hatred and blatant antisemitism now lies with the 90,000 Democratic Socialists, whose organization has apparently aligned with the tens of thousands of Pro-Hamas followers on college campuses across this supposedly inclusive country. Why are these students and protestors who are endorsing the atrocities of Hamas not automatically identified as purveyors of hate by liberal newspapers, university administrations, trustees, and progressive think tanks? Why the vanilla, non-committal, 'can we understand both sides' declarations of such alleged intellectuals?

This apparent nexus between Boycott, Divestment and Sanction (BDS) supporters and Pro-Hamas sycophants is beyond reasonable, constitutionally protected discourse. American Jewish citizens are being cornered, accosted, physically attacked and terrorized. Where is the collective outrage from Washington? How long before America experiences the Night of Broken Glass? If you think Kristallnacht cannot happen here, there are thousands in our major cities who may take that next fateful step.

Why are foreign students on visas who openly endorse terrorism not immediately deported? Why is the New York Times (NYT) so eager to publicize the propaganda of Hamas, without independent, on the ground verification? The retraction of a shockingly false NYT story that the Israelis launched a missile attack on a Gaza hospital, already did significant damage and inflamed the Middle East. Why are elite schools rushing to protect students who support Hamas and subsequently lost scholarships, internships, and job offers? Wouldn't their energies be better directed to counseling Jewish students and faculty members, adding campus security measures and expelling students who engage in documented hate crimes?

Good luck attempting to mediate a resolution at the United Nations (UN). The UN has devolved into an immoral and tyrannical cesspool. An international entity supposedly dedicated to the agenda of world peace, that deems Iran worthy of chairing the UN Human Rights Council, has lost its moral credibility a long time ago. Long a sounding board for virulent antisemitic speeches and General Assembly votes invoking anti-Zionist conspiracies, why are we wasting our hard-earned tax dollars to subsidize a platform for regimes that are anti-Jew, anti-gay and anti-woman. These pariah states gleefully celebrate genocide, engage in mass imprisonment of dissidents, promote no other religion than their own and instill strict Islamic law. No thank you!

Gaza has emerged as a parasitic incubator of terrorists and sleeper cells, but our taxpayer dollars, dispensed without any UN accountability, subsidize their savage ethos. Everything points that Palestinian leadership in the West Bank is not engaging in the same terrorist tactics, so it is safe to say that some still favor peaceful coexistence. In fact, many Palestinians in Israel identify themselves as Israelis in polling data. That non-confrontational element will have to rise above the eventual ashes of Hamas.

At one point during the Cold War, the UN served as an effective vehicle to resolve the threat of nuclear Armageddon between the United States and the Soviet Union. In fact, President Kennedy masterfully crafted the televised evidence at the UN against Soviet incursions during the Cuban Missile Crisis. The calling out of Soviet encroachment to a global audience, the authorization of a blockade by neighboring nations (Organization of American States) and successful back-channel diplomacy prevented World War III. Now the UN is nothing but a viper's nest of anti-West, communist, dictatorial, and fundamentalist Islamic bile. The body politics needs to be cleansed, as the UN was originally intended to promote democratic nations, not evil actors, religious fanatics, and war criminals.

We must remove ourselves from the colossal failure of the UN, through the creation of a new League of Democracies. We must optimize our economic, military, and consumer might to promote multiethnic harmony, religious freedom, equality of women and fair elections. To borrow a term from the DC Comics, the Iranian theocrats, Assad's Syria, Cuba, China, and Russia can form their own Legion of Doom. The young citizens residing in the Legion of Doom absolutely despise their governments. Why give a financial lifeline to those who seek to wage war, who call Jews subhuman and who deny human rights?

Biden's policies have directly fueled the carnage in the Middle East. Despite the deaths of thousands of Iranian protestors against Iran's Islamic theocracy, Biden relaxed $80 billion in oil sanctions leveled against that terrorist state. The Wall Street Journal pointed out that Hamas leadership met directly with the Iranian Revolutionary Guard to strategize the October 7th massacre in Israel. Between killing young Iranian women over a strict Islamic dress code, funding terrorism throughout the Middle East, funneling weaponry to Russia in its fight against Ukraine and harassing international shipping, what sea change in Iran's behavior would cause the Biden administration to open Iran's oil market? There was no change.

I am confident the UN building will fetch top dollar in today's real estate market when we finally wake up and terminate this façade of a peacemaking organization. ◊

Stockton Park Rededication & Unveiling Portraits

Lawrence - A special ceremony at Stockton Park (intersection of Winthrop Ave and South Union St) was held to rededicate the park in memory of Howard Stockton and to unveil five portraits of notable Lawrencians.

This project is unlike any other in the city and merges Lawrence's history with Lawrence's artists. In addition to unveiling the new Howard Stockton monument, Lawrence artists unveiled their portraits of Howard Stockton, Greg Kent, Alex Jimenez, Susan Crocker, and Abbott Lawrence.

The project was supported and co-sponsored by Mayor Brian A. DePena, City Council President Marc Laplante, and Lawrence Cultural Council Chair Patricia Mariano.

Howard Stockton succeeded Charles Storrow as the Essex Company Treasurer and lived most of his life as a businessman on several boards. He also served in the Union Army during the Civil War.

Heather Langlois, the Supervisor of Visual and Performing Arts K-12 with Lawrence Public Schools, painted Stockton's portrait.

SSgt Greg Kent (USMC), was one of our country's top runners in the 1960s and was scheduled to run in the Olympic trials, but was killed in action in Vietnam.

State Representative Francisco Paulino, who presented Kent's story commented, "Greg Kent was a hometown hero whose Olympic dreams were selflessly set aside for the battlefield of Vietnam. This portrait is a testament to history, a memorial in paint and feeling, ensuring that the tale of his bravery will forever resonate within our community's collective memory."

Stephanie Lima, an alumna from Lawrence High School and a current student at Mass Art, painted Kent's portrait.

Lesly Melendez, the Executive Director for Groundworks Lawrence gave spirited and moving comments about Sgt Alex Jimenez (USA). Jimenez was killed in the "triangle of death" in Iraq during Operation Enduring Freedom. Alex Jimenez's father, Andy, was present and was emotional as Melendez recounted Alex's story. Sydney Susan Meas, a Junior at Lawrence High School, painted Jimenez's portrait.

Lawrence Cultural Council Chair Patricia Mariano told Dr. Susan Crocker's story. Crocker's contribution was critical in the creation of Lawrence General Hospital. Mariano went on to speak about the importance of the project at Stockton Park. "The Lawrence Cultural Council is honored to play a role in the Rededication of Stockton Park and the inclusion of five panels celebrating Lawrencians who played a significant role in the history of our city. We hope that these panels will become a living history for generations to come depicting the contributions of each Lawrencian displayed."

Finally, Lawrence City Council President Marc Laplante spoke about the Stockton Park project and then focused on Abbott Lawrence. He mentioned that Lawrence was a businessman who helped create the Essex Company. This company purchased the land along both sides of the Merrimack River to create the dam and canals that brought hydropower to newly created mills. Through his financial contributions, he helped finance the industrial base in the city that was named after him.

Laplante also commented on the future of Stockton Park.

"This is truly a wonderful and dynamic project that will change periodically as new honorees are selected and new artists draw their portraits. These first five honorees are special as they kick off the project at Lawrence's major gateway entrance. We celebrate them and Stockton now and look forward to the project continuing and evolving with the next round of honorees and artists."

Celine Bran, a Junior at Lawrence High School, painted Crocker's and Lawrence's portraits. ◊

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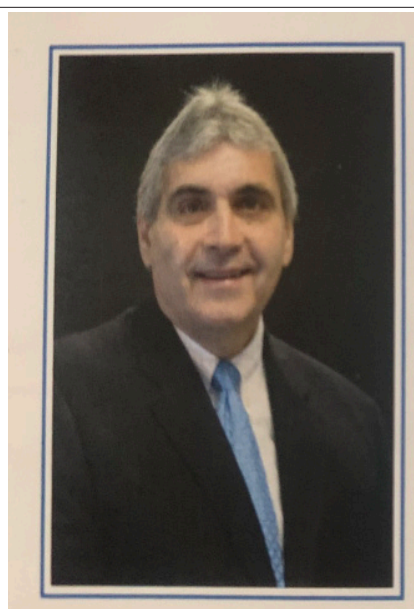

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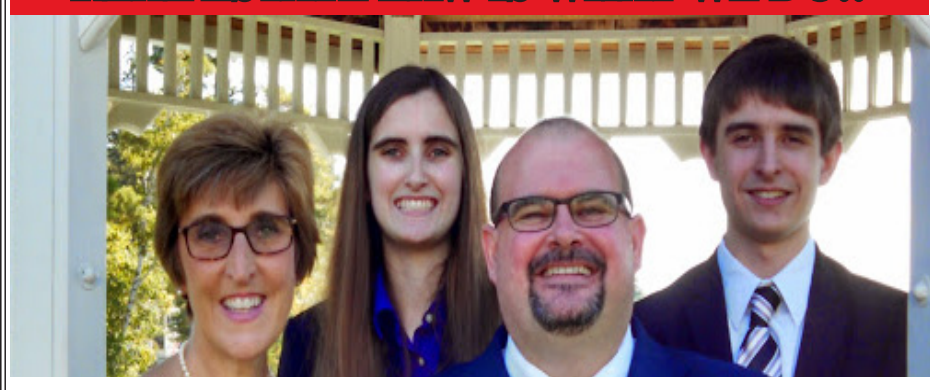

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COUNCILOR-AT-LARGE
(elect three)
D.J. Beauregard, Jr., Nicholas DiZoglio, and Jana Zanni Pesce
EAST DISTRICT COUNCILOR
Precincts 3,7,9,12,13,13A
(elect two)
Neily Soto and Ron Marsan
CENTRAL DIST. COUNCILOR
Precincts 1,2,6,10, 6A,14
(elect two)
Joel Faretra and Joyce Campagnone
WEST DISTRICT COUNCILOR
Precincts 4,5,8,11,15 (elect two)
Allison Saffie and Patricia Valley

LAWRENCE WINNERS

At Large City Council (elect 3)
Ana Levy, Jeovanny Rodriguez, and Celina Reyes
District A: Fidelina Santiago
District B: Wendy Luzon
District C: Gregory DelRosario
District D: Vivian Marmol
District E: Stephany Infante
District F: Marc Laplante

METHUEN COUNCIL LEADERSHIP ALREADY LOCKED UP?

The November municipal election is barely over sources close to Methuen City Councilor Dave Beauregard say that he and Councilor Faretra have made a deal and already secured the votes so that Beauregard will be appointed as "interim mayor" the next time Neil Perry is too ill to do the job and takes time off (or leaves office completely). The deal is also said to have Nick DiZoglio's blessing since they bought him off with the vice chairman's position and promising him the council chairmanship next year and sees Joel Faretra as the council chairman.

Now I don't know how Beauregard pulled all of this off but for my money I would rather see Ron Marsan as council president and Attorney Jana Zanni Pesce as the interim mayor since she actually has experience in the law, finance, and municipal finance. But that's just me, I'm a little biased since I actually look at qualifications instead of who's making deals with whom.

ANDREA ESTES FIRED

I don't know how it got past me but yellow journalist Andrea Estes - who has outright invented stories about Lawrence and Methuen based on who her political friends are (including yours truly) has been fired by the Boston Globe for ... you guessed it ... faking a story about the MBTA. If I had learned about it last Spring I would have put it in the notebook and taken a victory lap, but since I just found out I am doing it now.

STOP RENAMING THINGS!

Consider this as some friendly advice to Lawrence Mayor Brian DePena from a friend and supporter. Since DePena has become mayor, he has spent a lot of time naming and renaming things in the city.

In 2004, the very first year of The Valley Patriot, we published an article objecting to the naming of the transportation center on Merrimack Street for Senator Patricia McGovern. At the time we were lobbying local and state officials to name the transportation center for William McGuire. McGuire was a Lawrence Firefighter who lost his life in the line of duty and yet, here we are more than 19 years later, and the City of Lawrence has STILL done NOTHING to recognize his service and sacrifice.

Lawrence officials, however, have named and renamed a street after a millionaire Hollywood entertainer, a park for Nunzio DiMarca (who served on the city council for one term), named a bridge for a local business owner who never lived in the city, renamed a park for political activist Isabel Melendez, (originally named for ALL immigrants "Immigrant Park" and named dozens of other squares, parks and streets for politically connected people, all of whom are NOT fallen Firefighter William McGuire. So, my advice Mr. Mayor is this: stop renaming things and the next time you decide to name something new stop thinking about how to get a celebrity to come to the city or how you can pay back a political donor and think about the ultimate sacrifice that Lawrence Firefighter William McGuire made for the city and then name something after him!

TOM DUGGAN'S NOTEBOOK

Facebook restricted my profile page for "promoting hate" and then removed the photo above from my profile because it was "too dangerous" for my 16,000 followers to see. So, now it will be seen by our 20,000 newspaper readers because you cannot censor print newspapers - we are the number one weapon against electronic censorship!

PALESTINIAN FLAG IN NORTH ANDOVER?

As soon as a request was placed on the North Andover Selectmen's agenda to fly the "Palestinian" flag on the North Andover Common, my phone began to blow up with requests from every local activist and religious group begging me for advice on how to stop the flag from being flown.

This posed a real moral dilemma.

On the one hand, I am a First Amendment absolutist. I may hate your message, but I will fight to the death for your right to express it, especially in public. To oppose the "Palestinian" flag flying on the North Andover Common flies in the face of everything I believe in, especially since the Israeli flag was already approved and flew last month. Remember, even the ACLU (when they were a legitimate civil rights organization) defended the Ku Klux Klan's right to march in Skokie because they used to believe in free speech and free expression.

On the other hand, those who oppose the "Palestinian" flag being flown on the common make some very undeniable points. First, there is no nation of "Palestine" and no world body or legitimate nation state has ever recognized "Palestine" as a legitimate country. They are not, and their flag should not, be equated with Israel and their flag because Israel IS a legitimate nation state. Secondly, the so-called "Palestinians" voted for a genocidal Nazi terrorist group called "Hamas" to run their government. A government whose charter includes exterminating Jews as their number two goal. It is a moral conundrum for sure, and when we get closer to an actual vote, I will take a position and post it online.
I may even speak at the Board of Selectmen meeting if they ever have the balls to take the meausre up amid all the controversy. They have already postponed the measure once; I hope they will actually schedule it for the next meeting.

***

VIRTUAL ALZHEIMER'S SUPPORT GROUP AT METHUEN VILLAGE

Will be held on November 21st at 5:30PM hosted by Methuen Village Assisted Living and Memory Support Community, 4 Gleason Street, Methuen. Dealing with Alzheimer's disease and related dementia isn't easy, so it is helpful to share your concerns and personal experiences with others who completely understand what you're going through. You will also learn about proven strategies to help you better care for your family member. Contact Director of Compass Programming Jennifer Giedraitis at jgiedraitis@methuenvillage.com or 978-685-2220 for more information and the virtual meeting invitation. Please note that this is a virtual event.

NEW MOON COFFEE HOUSE HAVERHILL

Universalist Unitarian Church
15 Ashland St. (rtes. 110 and 125)

Garnet Rogers performs at the New Moon Coffeehouse in Haverhill on Saturday November 18th at 7:30 pm. The coffeehouse is located in the Universalist Unitarian Church, 15 Ashland St, Haverhill MA. Admission to the show is $25 cash; $15 cash for those ages 21 and under. Tickets for this show are available at the door starting around 6:30PM; doors open at 7PM. Tickets may be reserved prior to the show by visiting www.newmooncoffeehouse.org.

The New Moon is excited to have Garnet return to its stage. His towering presence, deep melodic voice, and meticulous finger picking guitar work saturate the room in song. He is widely considered one of the finest talents today. Garnet sings extraordinary songs about people who are not obvious heroes and of the small victories of the everyday. His music, like the man himself, is literate, passionate, highly sensitive, optimistic, and deeply purposeful. As memorable as his songs, his over-the-top humor and lightning-quick wit moves his audience from tears to laughter and back again.

The entrance to the New Moon Coffeehouse is on Ashland St, at the back of the UU church. There are 2 parking lots available behind the church, on both sides of Ashland St. Street parking is also available. ◊◊

WINSTON SAYS!

I am thankful for all of you who let your cats outside on Thanksgiving

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Sue Piazza's Book Reviews

Growing Up Under the Nazi Boot and the Greek Civil War, 2nd Edition

By: George Kakridas © 2023 George Kakridas

Genre: Autobiography

Bookmarkers: 4 of 5

I have read both of Mr. Kakridas' book editions. The first touches on his life under occupation while the second deals entirely with his growing up under the occupation and then the civil war. With more depth and detail, I found this second edition more in keeping with the title of the book. If you are looking to read about the Nazi and civil war struggle from the author's point of view, then I would suggest this 2nd edition.

For transparency, I know Mr. Kakridas. We are both military veterans and serve in Andover's American Legion Post 8. I have also shared many events with him with and without our Legion Post. We also share a Greek background. Given our connection, I still feel I have given an impartial review.

After April 1941 life changed in Greece. For the next nine years, the country was at war. First under the German occupation and later in a bloody civil war. Mr. Kakridas does an excellent job of explaining his formative years and life in and around his small town. One can feel and see life as it appeared to this five-year-old child. The horror and confusion over why they were being attacked are also evident.

There is so much more that history's first-hand account can tell us. For example: "...the Nazis retaliated harshly against the civilian populations by rounding up women and children in the squares and torturing and brutally executing them. The Nazis ordered that ten civilians would be executed for every Nazi soldier killed. Still, when they realized this measure was not working, they raised the retaliation killings to fifty villagers for every Nazi killed by the andartes or civilians."

Time is now revealing a little-known fact about Hitler that this author mentions —that Hitler was an addict. While I did know this, what I did not know was that his troops were also given drugs to keep them alert and active.

The staggering statistics of kidnapped children was eye-opening. It appears that this author, as well as the others in his area, were in constant fear of being abducted. Young children were routinely captured and taken to communist countries. These once-innocent souls were indoctrinated into communist theory and practice. They were then returned back to Greece to aid the communists in the country's civil war.

This author explains several times how his childhood and his life in Greece still affects him. This is apparent in his word choices. I could feel his hopelessness and despair at his lost immigration opportunity. I also felt the anger at his father for his perceived lack of help.

This book is at its best when the author recounts these personal experiences. The author's encounter with the locusts is a horror of Biblical proportions. This second edition has overcome some of the grammar and technical issues that were prevalent in the first edition, but not all.

While all the firsthand experiences were great, I could have done without the back-and-forth history. A lot of the historical facts are repeated, dates jumped around, and became confusing as times and chapters fluctuated between the Nazi occupation, and the Greek civil war.

Some passages were not clear. Ex: Amnesty Law of 1982 is mentioned at least three times without an explanation given as to what it is or what it did. At other places, paragraphs seemed out of order.

Despite some grammatical flaws, this book is well worth the read. It is a poignant, heartfelt narrative that should not be missed. I would recommend this autobiography.

Susan Piazza, a Navy veteran, is an author, columnist, and blogger. "A Bird Call That Isn't," her first book in her Ongoing Indigenous Tale series can be found on Amazon at A Bird Call That Isn't : A Bird Call That Isn't: American Indian Interracial Historical Romance (An Ongoing Indigenous Tale Book 1) ◊

If You Don't Come During the Year Don't Come on Thanksgiving!

Pictured above is Lawrence School Committeeman Jonathan Guzman and State Senator Pavel Payano. Like many in the Lawrence area, these kind people come to TMF's family dinner for the homeless year-round to donate food, set up tables, or serve the homeless. Every year on Thanksgiving, however, we have a slew of other public figures who NEVER show up to help during the year when there are no cameras or media attention, but magically appear on Thanksgiving and Christmas to mug for the cameras and pretend they care about the homeless with selfies on social media.

I want to warn every official who has never come to help TMF serve the homeless, please stay home this Thanksgiving and Christmas because you won't be recognized by TMF at the microphone, you won't get your photo in the newspaper, and you won't be thanked at the microphone. THAT honor is reserved for the people who care when there are no media cameras. People like Jonathan Guzman, Estela Reyes, Stephany Infante, and Pavel Payano!

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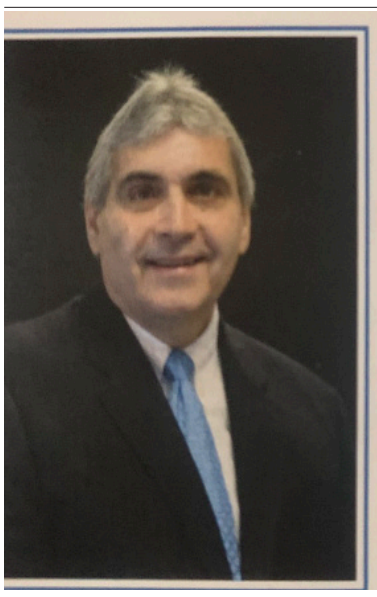

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BENEATH THE SURFACE WITH PAUL MURANO

November to Remember

For Catholic Christians, November is a month dedicated to remembering the dead. While October is set aside to honor the Mother of God incarnate, November is uniquely consecrated to commemorating those who have passed on before us.

This is more than just a kind of remembrance one has for a pleasant memory or an old TV show, however. It is an interactive commemoration. From what we understand through divine Revelation, even though the souls of the dead are disembodied, they retain consciousness and identity. The human soul is subsistent as the spiritual form of the body, and hence able to survive bodily death. Yet, since we are by nature body-soul composites, the soul by itself is incomplete. After its particular judgment, the personal soul knows its eternal destiny and anticipates the resurrection of the body on the last day.

The Church recognizes the souls of the dead that have attained salvation are still alive in Christ, and remain united in charity to the Church on earth. This is because the Church is the mystical body of Christ, spiritually united to her Head by the Holy Spirit, and comprised of a three-tiered community of persons: the Church Triumphant, the Church Suffering, and the Church Militant. These are the souls in Heaven, the souls in Purgatory, and the people on earth, respectively. The relationship within and between these three tiers is not disconnected due to physical death, but united in one body by the one Spirit, just as cells are united in a human body by its soul.

Only spiritual death cuts one off from the mystical body. The spiritually dead include souls in Hell and people on earth who are in the state of sin. The latter still have an opportunity to get right with God, but those who remain unrepentant unto death choose everlasting torment due to their irrevocable decision to refuse God's offer of wholeness and joy.

The souls in Heaven need no prayers. They have claimed their reward won for them by the sacrifice of Christ. The souls in Hell also need no prayers. They have permanently rejected God's goodness, choosing falsehood and hatred over truth and love. The two tiers of the mystical body that do need prayers are the Church Militant and the Church Suffering.

Those in Purgatory have been saved by their love of God, and are 'on route' to Heaven. To apprehend the conundrum of Purgatory, consider an analogy: A disobedient child is forgiven after being contrite for playing in the mud after being ordered by his parents not to do so. Although he's been reconciled with his parents, he's still not allowed to enter into the pristine atmosphere of the family banquet until after he serves a small punishment, takes a bath, and changes his filthy clothes.

This simple principle can be applied to the doctrine of Purgatory. Souls that are still attached to sin and haven't done sufficient penance in this life still need purgation in the next. Only with that are they fit to partake in the eternal banquet with God, the angels and saints; for nothing impure can enter the glorious gates of Heaven and experience the fullness of the beatific vision.

November, therefore, is the month Catholics set aside to honor the souls in Heaven and to pray for those in purgatory. The first two days – All Saints Day and All Souls Day – set the stage for a month of prayer and reflection. Since the three tiers are united in Christ, we all can benefit from each other's prayer and charity. This is the spiritual order of the mystical body ordained by God.

So pray for your dead loved ones. If you're convinced they're in Heaven, ask for their intercession. If you want to play it safer and assume they're in Purgatory, pray for their release. This month reminds us that love conquers death, earthly life is short, and what really matters is the eternal destiny we choose by how we love God seek to do His will.

Paul Murano is producer and host of Beneath the Surface video podcasts, and has taught college philosophy & theology for over 15 years. Check out some of his work at Paulmurano.com and Youtube.com/Veritas3737. E-mail Paul at PJDM@aol.com

THE DOCTOR IS IN!

Divorce

Dr. Pierre Ghassibi
VALLEY PATRIOT MEDICAL COLUMNIST

Greetings everyone,

Today's issue, divorce.

One of my many conversations with a teen called Hadaa:

Me: What do you have to tell me about divorce, Hadaa?

Hadaa: In divorce, insert respect and love in the equation.

Bashing the spouse does not gain you anything, no matter how angry you are. If you do, you may later lose the respect of your children and the respect of others involved. In any situation in life, stay peaceful and very noble. Fighting is selfish and too painful to engage in. Use your divine self, not your animal instinct. Most people go by the animal instinct that we all have.

Me: Yet, life can turn very empty and lonely.

Hadaa: Is there a way to refuse to be lonely? Can you make friends, help other lonely people, pick up a pleasurable activity or bring new ideas to work? Can you decide that fun will not stop, whatever happens in life?

Me: I am tired of being the nice guy while those around me are selfish wolves. I don't want to be a loser.

Hadaa: Will you feel better being a selfish wolf? Or do you prefer to be noble? There is heroism, high self esteem and yes, pleasure and happiness, in being a better person.

Me: Can I take Prozac too?

Hadaa: No! LOL. Let's go get a pizza instead.

(Hadaa died in the mid eighties from the " Midnight Sun " disease. I knew her as a patient and as a friend).

P. Ghassibi, MD
ghassibi@hotmail.com

NOTICE OF WINTER DEADLINES FOR STREET EXCAVATION PERMITS IN THE CITY OF LAWRENCE, MA

The last day street and sidewalk **excavation permits** can be taken out is October 31, 2023.

All excavation work and patching done under the 30 day permit must be completed by November 30, 2023. After November 1, 2023 only emergency permit requests supported by a written justification will be approved by the City Engineer.

~ Theo Rosario
Acting City Engineer

Property Sales, Foreclosures for OCT., 2023 in Andover, Lawrence, Methuen, North Andover. (All properties are listed in order; seller, buyer, price, address.)

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LG-Ohi Andover LLC, Andover Manor Propco LLC, $11,088,000, 89 Morton St

Casa Properties LLC, 100 Old River Road LLC, $6,400,000, 100 River Rd

39 Sunset Rock Road LLC, Ministers Lane LLC, $2,200,000, 39 Sunset Rock Rd

Yvon Cormier Tr & CA Investment Trust, David & Mary Geaslen Trs & David Geaslen 2014 Revocable Trust, $1,750,000, 31 Robert Dr Unit 6-4

Sai Builders, Kara Gillette, $1,525,000, 6 Lockway Rd

Kenneth H & Patricia E Rosen Trs & Rosen Living Trust, David & Susan Rosi, $1,520,000, 11 Blueberry Cir

Prabhakar Gowrisankaran & Sivasubramanian Ramya/Ramya Prabhakat, Tsz & Karen Yip, $1,440,000, 3 Deerberry Ln

Karla K Cook Tr & Three G Realty Trust, Brian & Teresa Murtagh, $1,405,000, 101 Holt Rd

David B & Lesley E Ribner, Farhan Zafar & Jaweriah S Siddiqui, $1,375,000, 39 Smithshire Estates

Brian A & Suzette M Toomey, 33 Smithshire Estates Realty Trust & Kristi Panduku Tr & Susan L Panduku Tr, $1,205,000, 33 Smithshire Estates

Cynthia J Aziz Russo/Cynthia J Aziz , Sameer & Vineeta Abbott, $1,120,000, 1 Pendant Ct

Victor J Mill III Tr & Victor J Mill III Trust-1994, Maureen S & Brandon A Bates, $1,025,000, 106 Elm St

John Gergos, Michael Thomas Hueras & Rhiannon Alix Campbell, $960,000, 54 Gray Rd

Cheryl A Bromander Tr & Bromander Family Trust, Qi Ming Lin & Hui Yu, $950,000, 28 Candelwood Dr

Noodle Realty Trust & Robert C Rogers Tr, Brian A & Suzette M Toomey Trs & Toomey 2017 Family Trust, $945,000, 22 Smithshire Estates

Carol F Sweeney, Jon J Tamposi Jr & Emily Eleanor Austin, $900,000, 216 Salem St

Anton & Barbara S Tevelev Trs & Clear Sky Trust, Katherine J Robinson Tr & Mark V Kane Tr & Blackbird Realty Trust , $870,000, 5 Wagon Wheel Rd

Richard Baril, Matthew William & Lauren Baer Preskenis, $867,750, 22 Pasho St, 0 Pasho St

Maureen A Murphy & Stephen S Boynton, Olivia Stork & Patrick Bradley & Nancy Porter Stork, $862,500, 56 Ballardvale Rd

Rujal Kansara & Jagat Parekh, Gregory & Laurel Rogowski, $847,500, 23 Iron Gate Dr

Susan Browne, 4 Tiffany Lane LLC, $820,000, 4 Tiffany

Christopher N Chapman, Khadija Moukrim & Mohammed Chaoucki, $785,000, 17 Rutgers Rd

Thomas R & Wanda J Callahan, Benjamin M & Sarah E Norton, $760,000, 24 Flint Cir

Dagmar Jacobson Revocable Living Trust & Kirsten Jacobson Tr, ARZ Realty LLC, $605,000, 335 Salem St

Kenneth V & Stephanie Burd, Devi Vedula, $590,000, 6 Overlook Dr Unit 401

Edgar & Elsa Defreitas, Merrimack Valley Real Estate Solutions LLC, $500,000, 41-43 Coolidge St

Amalie Ann George Tr & Thirteen Canterbury Street Realty Trust, 5 Mommouth Street LLC, $500,000, 13 Canterbury St

Michael Dinneen, Karen G David, $445,000, 4 Francis Dr Unit 204

Hebron Homes Inc, Robert A Cabral Jr, $385,000, 16 Balmoral St Unit 416

Douglas J Ahern & Janet L Mitchell, Breanne Palmer, $325,000, 62 Argilla Rd Unit 2

Jillian Comeau, Cassidy Saal, $315,000, 247 N Main St

Lawrence A Way & Lucia Davis , Jeanine J & Edward S Woods, $310,000, 247 North Main St Unit 4

Ana Maria Medeiros/Ana Maria Sousa Aguiar de Medeiros & Paulo De Medeiros/Paulo Renato de Sousa Aguiar de Medeiros & Cecelia Sousa De Medeiros Est/Cecelia M Medeiros Est & Manuel Aguiar De Medeiros Est/Manuel A Medeiros Est, Stephen F & Anne P Gross, $302,000, 100 Main St Unit 1

Thomas G Clerkin, Joie M Wheeler, $182,550, 2 Francis Dr Unit 404

David T Vining, Gregory A Darcey Tr & Sam City Trust , $150,000, South Main St

LAWRENCE

Angel & Jose Marine, 71-75 Common Street LLC & Jowamar Companies LLC, $825,000, 37 Newbury St

Juan Peralta & Jennifer Suriel Peralta/ Jennifer Suriel, Ebelyn R Reyes & Melfhys Almonte, $770,000, 106 Park St

Empire Investments LLC, Emmanuel Nunez Acosta & Yarilis M Barias, $750,000, 49-51 Bowdoin St

Santos & Carmen M Taveras, Aderlin Vasquez Ramirez & Michelle Vasquez, $745,000, 17-19 Jennings St

Ivan & Valentina Paniagua, Xiomara A & Jose Cabreja, $655,000, 160 Mt Vernon St

Migdalia & Jose G Ventura, Helen Rodriguez & Jose Morillo DeLeon & Elena Peguero Sanchez, $650,000, 51 May St

Diane Ruiz & Eladio Deleon & Eladio De Leon, Janausky Acevedo & Elsa Germisa Garcia De Acevedo & Gilberto Acevedo, $620,000, 207 Carleton St

Jesus Trejo, Aldo & Verna Rettagliati, $605,000, 14 Liberty Ave

Bryon A Garcia DeLeon, Leandro Peralta, $600,000, 4-6 Packard St

Jonathan J Paniagua & Jeannellie J Santiago, Gustavo A & Eliana Liranzo, $590,000, 19 Ridgewood Cir

Arthur Brown, Nicholas J Maisel & Kelly E Dietsch, $580,000, 15 Rockwood Ln

Michelle M Custeau, Jeremy Custeau, $550,000, 15 Leeds Ter

Milagros Acosta, Alba Vargas De Rodriguez, $540,000, 24 North Boylston St

Michael R Bucuzzo, Sergia Rosa, $535,000, 625 Andover St

Constitution Properties LLC, Elsa & Merlyn Properties LLC, $520,000, 28-30 Magnolia St

Carolyn M Bonier, Eric Michaud, $520,000, 6 Lorenzo Rd

Luisa Polanco Tr & 30-32 Alma Street Realty Trust, Adwoa Abbosey & Akua Oforiwaa, $500,000, 30-32 Alma St Unit 32

Daxad LLC & Juan Yepez & Luis Yepez, Marston Laser Holdings LLC, $491,100, 25 Marston St Unit A & 2

Laurie A Hogan & Tapan K Bhattacharjee/Tapan Bhattacharjee & Susan Hubbard & Anita Bhattacharjee, A&A Property Management LLC, $490,000, 201-203 Ferry St

Luis O Casilla & Sandra Casilla, Juan Alexis Rosa Salazar & Ysabel Gonzalez, $450,000, 10 Lynch St

Barbara W Homewood Ind Tr & Theresa S Witkos Est & Witkos Realty Trust, Daniel Pelgrift, $450,000, 46 Linehan St

John E Rheaume Est & Sherri A Perkins, Basilio De Leon Sarat & Rosa De Leon, $440,000, 97 Sylvester St

Margurite P Kane & James J Sweeny Est, Marguerite P Kane, $440,000, 5 Standish Rd

Laura Bennett, Nelson R De Los Santos & Isidra A Fermin & Angel Y De Los Santos, $388,000, 142 East Haverhill St Unit 2

Nashalis Skerett Burgos & Johsbian Rodriguez, Ana D Rodriguez & Joel V Henriquez Berroa, $385,000, 145 Prospect St Unit 1

Colin W Quinlan, Xinxian Chen, $360,000, 24 Orchard St

Miriam Lopez, Pablo Perez, $319,000, 36 Orchard St

Robert A Conte Tr & DMC Wilbur Trust, Al Barakah LLC, $275,000, 10 Wilbur St Unit 1

Anthony Ansaldi Tr & Anthony V Ansaldi Tr & Cameron-Bishop/ Janton Trust, Antonia Rosado Cruz & Anthony Melendez, $249,900, 24-26 Inman St Unit 37

Jisell Difo, Yuliana M Difo, $127,000, 49 Walnut St

Wendy Mejia & Diogenes Martin Blanco, Wendy Mejia, $100,000, 459-463 Broadway

Roberto Tavares, Daher Group Inc, $50,000, Granville St

Jeanette DeNuccio, Raymond DeNuccio Jr & Maria DeNuccio, $42,009, 19 Canton St

METHUEN

Western Realty Trust & Valerie A Hyder Tr, Singh Real Estate LLC, $1,137,500, 2 Gaythorne Rd

Toll MA Land III LP, Robert N & Risa S Cohen, $1,008,039, 145 Phoebe St Unit 82

Charles & Deborah Salvo, Yanilda Santos, $900,000, 3 Chestnut Wy

Toll MA Land III LP, James B & Cathi Z Ritter, $853,587, 141 Phoebe St Unit 80

Toll Ma Land III LP, Thomas J & Peggy Liang Curatolo, $838,404, 143 Phoebe St Unit 81

Alessando Lomagno & Rachel Tulley, Danilo J Suriel & Jennifer Amarante, $800,000, 23 North St

Lauren Betancourt & Nicholas Enxing, Onelia Martinez, $800,000, 12 Tucker Ter

Toll Ma Land III LP, Michael Sibel & Royce Lopez-Sibel, $790,654, 36 Phoebe St Unit 103

Toll MA Land III LP, Katherine Rennie Wharton, $790,000, 32 Phoebe St Unit 105

Stephen & Paula Donahue/Paula Vachon, Magdy Ghattas & Nagafa Samour, $775,000, 15 Trenton St

Rachel M Buonopane, Zulma Meliza Caprio, $775,000, 14 Buttonwood Dr

Toll MA Land III LP, Debra K Luther Tr & Debra K Luther Revocable Living Trust, $770,743, 34 Phoebe St Unit 104

Toll MA Land III LP, Peter M & Marga Van Breda Trs & Peter M Van Breda Trust & Marga Van Breda Trust, $751,664, 6 Cardinal Rd Unit 190

LLB Construction Inc, Luis Santiago Sr, $750,000, 386 Oak St

Toll MA Land III LP, Victoria V Vissering Tr & Vistoria V Vissering Revocable Trust, $736,995, 2 Cardinal Rd Unit 192

Toll MA Land III LP, Ann Marie Hollow Tr & 4 Cardinal Road Trust , $722,000, 4 Cardinal Rd Unit 191

Perrault Family LP, Elie C Maroun Tr & LisaMaria Maroun Tr & Hampshire Group Realty Trust, $700,000, 26-34 Hampshire St

Marston Laser Holdings LLC, HTA-Holy Family MOB LLC, $652,165, 60 East St Unit 1100

John D & Evelyn M Tobin, Kathryn Pabst, $650,000, 38 Herrick Dr Unit 70

Lynn M Dahill/Lynn M Page & Amanda P Karch, Roland E Duval Jr & Andrea Madison-Duval & Jack N Duval, $649,900, 26 Glen Forest Ln

Brett W & Danielle M Potter, Allison Parent & Nich DiBlasi, $620,000, 10 Chippy Ln

Maureen B Ciardiello, Thomas & Gloria M Abbasciano, $600,000, 34 Sycamore Rd

Nicholas Barreto, Dolis E Negron & Juan Negron & Juan Carlos Negron, $600,000, 47 River Blv

Nicholas Barreto, Dolis E Negron & Juan Negron & Juan Carlos Negron, $600,000, 47 Riverview Blv

Steven Omar Llanos & Deandra Ramirez, Kipchirchir Cheruiyot, $580,000, 6 Oakcrest Cir

George R & Diane M Ultrino, Renato Alexandre Tomaz, $570,000, 5 Garside Ter

Gamaliel & Juan Echevarria , Gladys M Ordonez Abrego & Carlos A Abrego Sanchez, $550,000, 6 Bartlett Rd

Samuel Taveras, Christina Maria Kordas, $542,500, 1065 Riverside Dr

Christopher R Allard & Susan Sabrina Allard-Chavez, Arely Santos Santos & Alex Bladimir Santos, $525,000, 87 Edgewood Ave

Michelle Baddour , Christpoher R & Susan Allard, $525,000, 25 Stoneybrook Rd

Laura L & Richard C Francis, Alvaro Gutierrez & Tanairy De Santiago, $507,500, 37 East Brook Pl

Goldwetha Investments LLC, Rosalba Santana, $500,000, 70 Derry Rd

Lillian T Coco, Alejandro A Ciscneros & Andrew Cisneros , $485,500, 24 Channing St

Athena Melucci, Michael & Carla

REAL ESTATE: NEXT PAGE

Cherelli, $460,000, 7 Louise Ave
Kevin M & Linda J Leavitt, Samuel Taveras, $455,000, 40 Strathmore Rd
Sheryl A Jimenez, Ana Alba Cruz, $455,000, 19 Emery St
Gary A Campiola Est & Douglas J Campiola, Katia Cilene & Lemos De Souza, $445,000, 411 Oak St
Harold S Otto Tr & Otto Family Realty Trust & Barbara A Janco Tr & Scott One Family Trust , Elias Martinez & Karen I Perez, $440,000, 10 Bedford St
Carmine Russo & Carl Russo & Charles Russo Jr & Constance Domey, Osmel Urena Rojas & Yoheidy Genao, $426,000, 7 Miller St
Barbara A Desroches Tr & Puglise Family Irrevocable Income-Only Trust, Joseph D Cutuli /Joseph Cutuli & Rebecca E Waning /Rebecca Waning, $417,000, 105 Merrimack Rd Unit B
Joseph M Coury Est & David A Brousseau, Amanda Daniels & Angelo Maimone, $410,000, 43 Monterey Dr
Michael Carli, John C Smith, $390,000, 23 Hampshire Rd Unit 112
Elizabeth Gomez, Roger Joseph, $375,000, 71 Oakland Ave Unit 3
Kathleen A & Henry E Mills, Rafic & Aniece Saadi, $370,000, 168 Cross St
Jordan D Kasper, Jonathan Kerble, $365,000, 21 Hamshire Rd Unit 316
Lan Wu, Lynn & Darren Muise, $355,000, 34 Burnham Rd Unit 102
Carol Reitano, Jon Languet, $350,000, 34 Burnham Rd Unit 403
Charolette A Parnagian Tr & C D D Realty Trust, EOA Properties LLC, $315,000, 51 Railroad St
Wendy R Olinsky Tr & Rose Realty Trust, Foy Law Office PLLC, $285,000, 380 Merrimack St Unit 2-E
Francis Paul Cardone & David Cardone Est & Francis Paul Cardone Tr & 37 Baremeadow Street Realty Trust, Deana Marie Cardone, $284,000, 37 Baremeadow St
Reina Cruz-Lemus, Francisco Polanco, $230,000, 65 Mystic St Unit 65-7
Sarah T Martinez/Sara T Martinez, Sumaya Simo, $200,000, 49 Gaston St Unit 49
Sterling Ventures Inc, Abreu Construction Corp Tr & Abreu Construction Realty Trust, $175,000, 35 Baremeadow St.

NORTH ANDOVER

LG-Ohi Turnpike LLC, Andover Forest Propco LLC, $10,224,000, 1801 Turnpike St
Benjamin P Goodman Tr & Eastie Realty Trust, Second & Main LLC, $1,518,000, 149 Main St
NAOP Medical Realty LLC, Merrimack College, $1,400,560, 451 Andover St Unit 300-1 Etc
Joseph H & Nancy L Barnes Trs & 41 Sherwood Drive Realty Trust, Nehman Soufan, $1,300,000, 41 Sherwood Dr
Joseph & Valerie Cinseruli Trs & Cinseruli Revocable Living Trust, Tyler A & Kara Marie Bennett, $1,250,000, 10 Pine Ridge Rd
Ryan Williams & Brittany L Fourgues , Noah Goldstein, $1,200,000, 31 Court St
Kevin & Nicole Aheron, Bijan N Zandbod & Sarah M Milkovich, $1,080,000, 517 Johnson St
Michael Mastromonaco, Second & Main LLC, $1,014,000, 14 Second St
Per-Arne Oines & Jane L Running, Mariella & Matthew Cecchini, $1,000,000, 885 Forest St
Patricia M & Bryan C Holasek, Matthew & Michelle Renda, $950,000, 190 Granville Ln
Neal R & Nancy E Shapleigh, Katherine Kelly, $950,000, 75 French Farm Rd
Nancy S Moren, Matthew R & Stephanie L Turmel, $890,000, 89 Phillips Common
Jenna Cornelia Vandeventer, Andre & Edith Ravenelle, $885,000, 72 Gray St
Timothy Breen & Shelby Hutchins, Elliot & Christine Shea, $853,000, 10 Lorraine Ave
William & Linda K Mann, Brendan M Farrand & Bianca Elizabeth Linda Brown, $825,000, 503 Boston St
Teresa Dunleavy Tr & Patricia A Tripoli Revocable Trust, Jan Yang, $799,000, 1 Chatham Cir Unit B
Northshore Real Estate Solutions LLC, Kyle & Marissa Gletow, $715,000, 54 Summer St
Marco & Molly Sanchez, Andrew & Keah Malian, $700,000, 795 Johnson St
Bank of New York Mellon & Charles J Weber Jr, Vuty Sorpol, $661,000, 61 Fox Hill Rd
Wendy Reed, Luciano Ricci, $650,000, 50 Jetwood St
Property Possible Inc, Whitney Varrati & Vanessa Varrati, $640,000, 65 Marblehead St
Howard M Berger Tr & 79 Moody Street Realty Trust, Douglas Ahearn, $525,000, 79 Moody St
451 North Andover Realty LLC, Merrimack College, $499,440, 451 Andover St Unit 300-1 Etc
Mark J McMurray Tr & James R McMurray Real Estate Trust, Cosmas C & Vivian A Ejiofor, $475,000, 25 Massachusetts Ave
Christopher T Tierney & Gail C Tierney Est, Mary E Cranston, $425,000, 350 Greene St Unit 210
Kristin R Abrams, Alokendu & Nandita Bhattacharya, $423,000, 200 Chickering Rd Unit 205B
Wachtel Realty LLC, 451 North Andover Realty LLC, $418,000, 451 Andover St Unit 300-1
65 Beverly Realty Trust & Peter E Graziani Tr , Marius Adrian Iorga, $375,000, 65-67 Beverly St
Christopher S Stuetzle, Christopher P Terrio & April M Darcy, $369,900, 120 Kingston St Unit 120
Margaret J Betts Tr & Margaret J Betts Charitable Remainder Trust, Edwin O & Helga M Flores, $355,000, 148 Kingston St Unit 148
NAOP Medical Realty LLC, Wachtel Realty LLC, $283,400, 451 Andover St Unit 202

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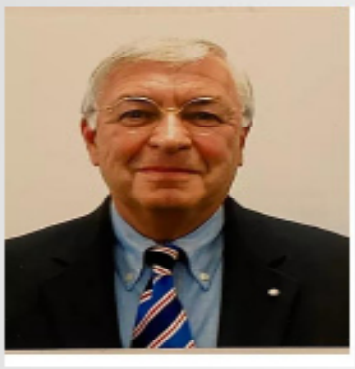

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HERO: FROM PAGE 1

Norfolk, Virginia for the Mediterranean. In August of 1950, she was ordered to embark US Marines and proceed via the Suez Canal to Japan, and then on to service in the Korean War. Upon arrival into the combat zone, the ship proceeded to the Korean coast, where James took part in the Inchon and Wonsan amphibious landings and the evacuation of Chinnampo and Inchon. Departing the Far East 1951, the crew proceeded back to San Diego, California.

After serving on active duty for twelve years, James went on to serve our Nation as a teacher in Springfield, Massachusetts, later serving as an assistant school principal in Barre, Massachusetts, and finally ending his teaching career as the Director of Vocational Education, in Somerville, Massachusetts. He also served as a Reserve Naval Officer for an additional thirteen years. James's total US Naval Service was over twenty-five years as a commissioned officer. I asked James, who he felt was easier to supervise, US Navy Sailors and US Marines? Or American school children and American teachers? He said, "Being a wartime US Naval Officer is fairly easy, when compared to being an American school teacher or school administrator."

James grew up with three brothers, all who have served in the US Armed Forces, one as a US Navy Seabee, another serving in US Naval Aviation, both during World War II. A third brother served in the US Army as a cook, seeing combat in Korea. James said while his brother cooked for his fellow soldiers, he always had a rifle nearby.

James and his wife Barbara have been married for sixty-three years. He is looking forward to his 101st birthday party on November 26th! US Naval Officer, Educator, Husband, Grandfather, Great Grandfather, and Great, Great, Grandfather, James Fiorello is a "hero in our midst."

The Haverhill, Methuen, Andover, and Dracut American Legion Posts ask all World War II, Korean War, and Vietnam War Veterans, to call (603) 518-5368 and sign up for an Honor Flight to the Memorials in Washington DC! Veterans of all eras are asked to go to the American Legion's Web site www.legion.org, and join the American Legion, our mission is working with Congress, Veterans, and the Community, preserving our Veteran's Benefits for future generations and serving all Veterans and their families.

John Cuddy served in the US Navy's Construction Battalions (also known as the Seabees) after retiring from the US Navy; he earned a bachelor's in history and a master's in economics from the University of Massachusetts on the Lowell Campus. He has been employed in Logistics at FedEx for the last 26 years. If you know a World War II, Korean War, or Vietnam War Veteran who would like their story told, please email him at John.Cuddy@Yahoo.com.◊

Factorial Energy Opens New Manufacturing Facility in Methuen

Will House Largest Solid-State Battery Line in the US

Factorial Inc. (Factorial), an industry leader in the development of solid-state battery technology for electric vehicle (EV) applications, today announced the opening of its new battery manufacturing facility in the Boston suburb of Methuen, Mass. The state-of-the-art facility represents a significant step in scaling up the production of Factorial's innovative solid-state battery technology for EVs. An opening ceremony will be held at the facility in Methuen at 11:00 am EDT today, featuring remarks from Governor Maura Healey and Methuen Mayor Neil Perry.

"We are thrilled to open our next-generation battery facility in Massachusetts as we scale our batteries for mass production," said Siyu Huang, CEO of Factorial. "This facility will enable us to manufacture cells to meet the needs of our automotive partners and progress our mission to commercialize solid-state batteries. As a U.S. company, we're also proud to contribute to the onshoring of battery manufacturing for EVs and advancement of battery innovation for a differentiated supply chain."

The new facility represents a $50 million investment and is expected to create over 150 local jobs. Located in the greater Boston area, Factorial's operations remain close to its newly opened R&D facility and corporate headquarters advancing the production of Factorial's solid-state battery technology for its automotive partners. The current footprint will accommodate up to a 200MWh assembly line, which is expected to be the largest solid-state battery assembly line in the U.S.

"Factorial continues to drive the battery industry forward and this milestone is no exception," said Joe Taylor, Executive Chairman of Factorial and Former Chairman and CEO of Panasonic Corporation of North America. "Automaker demand for American-made batteries is high to produce electric or hybrid vehicles that qualify for incentives. Our facility will manufacture automotive-sized solid-state batteries at pre-production speed and volume, illuminating a clear path to mass production and reaching economies of scale."

Factorial's proprietary FEST® (Factorial Electrolyte System Technology) quasi-solid-state batteries are designed for higher energy density and safety compared to lithium-ion batteries.

As Factorial Energy scales up solid-state battery production, the company maintains its commitment to drive sustainability and develop technology that powers the EV revolution. ◊

TV TALK with BILL CUSHING

“Tacoma FD”

Bill Cushing
VALLEY PATRIOT TV COLUMNIST

My recommendation this month is a show that you most likely have never heard of. That’s probably because it airs on TruTV, a channel you also most likely have never heard of. But if you are looking for a quick binge watch that will make you laugh, then ‘Tacoma FD’ is the show you should be watching.

Now with 4 seasons under its belt, ‘Tacoma FD’ is the outrageous comedy developed by two members of the Broken Lizard Troupe: Kevin Heffernan and Steve Lemme. The Broken Lizard comedy troupe is responsible for the ‘Super Troopers’ films.

The show follows the daily lives and antics of Chief Terry McConky (Heffernan), Captain Eddie Penisi (Lemme) and the daytime crew at a firehouse in one of America’s wettest cities. Being in one of the rainiest cities in America, leaves lots of time for its resident firefighting team to goof around, pull pranks, ramble on about nothing in particular for extended stretches, and indulge in completely juvenile humor.

With the two co-creators taking the roles of the fire station’s two higher-ups, there are a bunch of other hilarious characters to round out the cast. First up is Granville “Granny” Smith (Marcus Anderson), who’s possibly Tacoma FD’s most logical and pragmatic character, never quite letting laughs override responsibilities.

On the flip side is the completely illogical and radically impulsive Ike Crystal (Gabriel Hogan.) Ike rocks the show’s best physique, which ties into his other job as a male stripper, but he also has a heart of gold. Ike is quite fond of Andy (Eugene Cordero.) Andy takes the most razzing and ribbing, and he’s an admittedly worthy target, while he’s there.

Andy’s character left the show following season 3 and was replaced in Season 4 with the probie Andres Mickleberry (Christopher Avila). Rounding out the crew is Chief McConky’s daughter Lucy (Hassie Harrison) and although she provides a counterbalance to the male frat boy humor in the show, she can joke right along with the rest of the crew, and provides some really funny moments.

While this show centers on firefighters, it certainly doesn’t show any disrespect to the profession. “It’s 90 percent about the firefighters’ downtime,” Lemme said.

“These guys are great at their jobs; we don’t want Tacoma firefighters to think we’re poking fun at their level of skill.” In fact, Heffernan got a lot of ideas about funny things firefighters do from his brother-in-law, a firefighter in Connecticut, and now a consultant on the show. For example, in one episode, the characters use the Jaws of Life to play Jenga with big pieces of wood.

There are also plenty of plain old gags. In one episode, Heffernan’s Chief Terry McConky, sits down to discuss serious city business with a Tacoma City Councilwoman. Then she notices a mug sitting on his desk that says, “No. 1 Farter.”

Think of the humor of such movies as ‘Animal House,’ or ‘Caddyshack’ and change the location to a firehouse and you’ll get the idea of what ‘Tacoma FD’ is all about. With bad news around every corner these days, sometimes it’s good to just put something fun and mindless on TV and just laugh. This show will do that for you.

‘Tacoma FD’ airs on TruTV and can be streamed on Max.

If you have any questions about TV, you can email me at BillsTVTalk@gmail.com. I will answer all of your questions and will feature some of the questions I receive in a future Mailbag column.

Follow me on Twitter and Instagram @BillsTVTalk and on Facebook at BillsTVTalk for daily up-to-the-minute TV news and discussion. ◊

Don’t Be Afraid to Scatter!

Peter Larocque
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

Greetings and God Bless you all in the wonderful name of Jesus Christ! I pray that you all are doing well and are ready to receive another Word from our Heavenly Father.

We read in Acts 1:8, the following, “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” NKJV. These instructions were given by Jesus to His Apostles whom He had chosen, on the Day of the Ascension, some 40 days after His Resurrection from the dead. Then 10 days later, on the Day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came like a rushing mighty wind and came upon all those who were present and all were filled. No one was missed! This Feast of Pentecost took place around 29 or 30 AD.

The second half of the instructions given by Jesus in Acts 1:8 didn’t come into play until Acts 8:1, about 35 or 36AD, some 5 or so years later, which reads, “Now Saul was consenting to his (Stephen’s) death. At that time a great persecution arose against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.” NKJV.

For the believers in the early church to move out of Jerusalem, to do what Jesus told them to do, there had to be persecution against the church. My question is, why did it take persecution against the church for the believers to leave Jerusalem and go to Judea and Samaria? Furthermore, Acts 10 takes place around 40AD, when Peter first witnessed to Cornelius, a Roman Soldier, a Gentile. Which by the way, was another 5 years or so, making it approximately 10 years before the Gentiles were brought into the church after the original instructions given by Jesus in Acts 1:8.

Could the answer be that the Church then was suffering from the same problem as the Church of today? The problem of being Afraid to Scatter! The Church then was too comfortable and playing safe as is the Church today, which is too comfortable and playing safe! We love being in our comfort zone! We love staying where we are, where it is safe, and within our 4 walls. We love our denominations and our doctrines, we love being under the protection of our walls and our way of doing Church!

Didn’t we learn anything from Covid? Church online grew like never before and Church became outside its 4 walls. After all, The Church is the people, not walls, or its flavor of doctrine. The Church in all actuality was never meant to be comfortable. The Church of Jesus Christ is supposed to experience growing pains. It is to be constantly on the move sharing the Gospel, the Good News, and pointing people to Jesus Christ! The Apostle Paul wrote in Galatians 4:19, “My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you,” NKJV. The Apostle Paul compared sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ with the Galatians with birth pains. If I remember correctly, there was nothing comfortable about watching my wife give birth to our children. I think that she would agree with me, especially since she was the one giving birth, although, these were beautiful moments for our family. Isn’t this what Jesus told His disciples to do in Matthew 28:19, “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,” NKJV. This is the Great Commission!

It is repeated in the Gospel of Mark with more details, Mark 16:14-18, “And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.17 And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; 18 they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.” NKJV.

And there is more…, in Mark 16:19-20, “So then, after the Lord had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God. 20 And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word through the accompanying signs. Amen.” NKJV. They preached everywhere and The Lord worked with them!

Everywhere means everywhere, including outside of their comfort zone! The Gospel of Luke written by Luke who also wrote the Book of Acts, adds, Luke 24:46-49, “Then He said to them, “Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, 47 and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. 48 And you are witnesses of these things. 49 Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.” NKJV.

We find ourselves right back to where we started, with Jesus on the Day of the Ascension telling His disciples to wait in Jerusalem until they receive the Promise of the Father, Power from on High! This Power was to enable them to Scatter everywhere Preaching Jesus! We have this same Power today! But what about persecution or tribulation? Here is what Jesus said, in John 16:33, “These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; [persecution] but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.” NKJV.

God Bless, Have a Happy and Joyful Thanksgiving!

Peter Larocque
peterlarocque@hotmail.com ◊

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